



GET ON YOUR MARKS FOR THE BLACK COUNTRY ROAD RUN



Run organisers from the Rotary Club and Meeting Place

THE sixth annual Black Country Road Run takes place on Sunday but with a new twist.

For the first time the event includes a Halesowen Elite 5k timed race. This race is specifically for those runners who are able to complete a 5k course in under 30 minutes.

More than 1,000 people are expected to take part in the event, which is organised by Halesowen and Rowley Regis Rotary Club.

The event starts in Halesowen town centre with the Elite 5K starting at 9am. The 10k race will then begin at 9.45am, started by the Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler, and will be followed by the family fun run starting at 11.30am.

Alan Bowler, from Halesowen and Rowley

Regis Rotary Club, said: "We would love to have more families out on the day."

"People can run, they can walk. They could even take the dog. We just want people to have a good time. It is an event which is open to all ages."

Closures

Temporary road closures will be in place.

Roads that will be closed from 6am until 1pm include Pool Road, Great Cornbow, Rumbow, Birmingham Street, Birmingham Road and Hagley Road (the section between Queensway roundabout and Hagley Street only).

Other roads to be closed from 9am until 11am are Dogkennel Lane, Summer Hill

(between Hagley Road and Queensway), Summer Hill (between Dogkennel Lane and Powell Street), Waxland Road and Broadway Avenue.

Alternative routes during the town centre closures will include New Road, High Street, Queensway and Bromsgrove Street. Runners with a range of abilities will be raising funds for their own chosen charities and the club's good causes.

Last year 1,200 people took part in the event, which is part of the summer's Black Country Festival, and raised many thousands of pounds for charities.

More details can be found at www.theblackcountryrun.com website.

LEISURE

Bid for Games key to swimming pool

THE Commonwealth Games could come to Sandwell in 2022 with a new Olympic-sized swimming pool built for the occasion.

The borough could host all swimming and diving events as part of Birmingham's bid to host the globally significant tournament.

Sandwell Council bosses have been approached by chiefs in Birmingham to back their bid which, if successful, would result in a new leisure centre for the borough with an Olympic-sized swimming pool, fit for the Games.

Council chiefs have hailed Sandwell's role in the bid, declaring the Commonwealth Games would propel the borough 'onto the world map'.

ENVIRONMENT

Recycling banks are now being removed

COUNCIL chiefs in Dudley are to withdraw the borough's mini recycling centres, which have been dotted around the borough for 15 years, partly because of fly-tipping at the sites.

The authority has confirmed the remaining banks will be removed.

Dudley's environment services boss Councillor Karen Shakespeare said: "We now have a robust fortnightly kerbside recycling service available to households across the borough, making these bins surplus to requirement."

CRIME

Cold caller bogus officials on prowl

BOGUS council officials are on the prowl targeting residents in Dudley borough.

Reports have been made that bogus officials are operating in the area claiming to be from Dudley Council's Green Care Team, carrying out unnecessary work then demanding payment from residents.

Councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member responsible for trading standards, said: "A number of reports have been made about these bogus callers, although fortunately we are not aware that anyone has handed over any money to them. All Dudley Council staff carry identification but none will ask for payment."

INSIDE

ROADSHOW'S £1m DISCOVERY



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Businesses urged to vote for new funding initiative

TOWN'S BID TO BE EVEN BETTER

TRADERS in Halesowen are voting on a proposal to launch a business improvement district (BID) – a move which organisers say could bring in £600,000 to boost the town centre.

Business ratepayers in the town have until July 12 to cast their vote on the proposed Halesowen BID.

The scheme would see businesses join forces to create a single company, with each member paying a levy. Members would then get to decide how the money is spent.

The cash could be used to fund special events for Halesowen, to improve security or promote the town and make it more attractive to visitors.

In a five-year proposal booklet for the scheme, organisers say: "Faced with fierce competition from the glitzy shopping centres, Halesowen needs to create a fresh, modern and vibrant image."

"Without a clear unified marketing strategy money is being wasted on businesses individually marketing their offering when a collective effort would return more dividends."

Among the proposals put forward are an investment in CCTV cameras, free car parking and making empty shops look more attractive.

Haven

Work could also be done with West Midlands Police to create a 'late night safe haven' to boost the night-time leisure economy.

The district's area covers around 400 companies, including those in the Cornbow Shopping Centre.

Firms would pay under £450 a year to fund the move, raising £600,000 to be spent across the district over the next five years.

Similar BIDs are already operational

Report by Alex Ross

elsewhere in the Black Country, in Wolverhampton, West Bromwich and Bilston.

Chairman of Halesowen Chamber of Trader, Wayne Edwards said: "Halesowen is one of the many hidden gems located within and near to the Black Country, offering space and facilities not only for trading purposes but for community cohesion opportunities."

"It is an important place for us all to work, relax and socialise."

"But we all know it could be improved, however, to do so crucial investment is required."

Mr Edwards added: "Just imagine if Halesowen had £600,000 to invest in making our town stronger, safer and more successful over the next five years."

"It doesn't have to remain a dream."

In urging businesses to vote for the BID, he said: "If we all stand united, the next five years will be an exciting and prosperous time for us all."

More information is available at www.halesowenbid.co.uk website.

Ready for Halesowen 'best carnival'



Organisers and entertainers are gearing up for the third Halesowen Carnival and Music Festival

HALESOWEN Carnival on Saturday promises to be bigger and better than ever.

Former Villa and Wolves winger Tony Daley and TV weatherman and ex-EastEnders actor Des Coleman will be opening the third Halesowen Carnival and Music Festival. Part of the Black Country festival, the event this year includes a food and drink festival and a dog show.

Entry to the carnival at Highfield Park is free.

The event, on from noon to 8pm, will also include a large fair, craft stalls, wrestling and much more spread over two fields.

Helping provide the liquid refreshments will be Halesowen micro brewery The Fixed Wheel, Lye brewery Sadler's and Scottish craft cider producers Waulkmill Cider.

The carnival's 'Royal Family' include youngsters recognised for their bravery and community work.

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Public honour heroes past and present



Lance Corporal Gareth Morris

HUNDREDS gathered at Himley Park to enjoy a host of attractions and show their respect to the Armed Forces.

There was live music, military vehicles, meet and greets and exhibitions at the famous venue to celebrate Armed Forces Day, with the community coming out in droves to honour servicemen and women.

The event was held on Sunday afternoon and gave members of the public a chance to learn more about the Armed Forces, watch veterans awarded badges as well as enjoy the entertainment.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler spoke of his delight at the turnout for the event, which he called 'the highlight of any mayor's year'.

"This was an event I was looking forward to when I became mayor and it has really lived up to my expectations," he said.

"I think it is the highlight of any mayor's year because it really does bring people together for all of the right reasons. We owe a lot to the Armed Forces and this gives us a chance to thank them for all they do."

Live music on the day came from the Land Girls and the RAF Cosford Voluntary Band, while fun fair rides and a vintage tea room kept the young and older generations entertained.

Jack Keiras, 67, of Sedgley, who served in the Catering Corps for 12 years from 1976, said: "We need the Armed Forces more than ever and I think people are aware of that. That is what has made this year's event so special and you can really see that people are taking a keen interest in thanking the Armed Forces personnel."

Hospitals 'among worst for stillbirths'

THREE Black Country hospital trusts have been named among the worst in the country for stillbirths and babies dying within 28 days of being born.

A report claims that death rates among babies born at maternity units in Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell are at least 10 per cent higher than the national average.

But health chiefs have hit back, saying they work in a highly deprived area where people generally lead unhealthier lifestyles.

Wolverhampton also argues its specialist status means it takes on riskier cases.

The three trusts are among 21 out of 165 across the UK which have been traffic-lighted as 'red', and ordered to take action to improve.

Overall, stillbirths fell by eight per cent between 2013 to 2015 from 4.20 to 3.87 per 1,000 births. But the authors of the report said that the rates still remain high compared with similar European countries and that there was 'significant variation' across Britain. Wolverhampton reported a fall in stillbirths but a rise in deaths of babies aged 24 to 27 weeks.

The problem has been highlighted in the new 'Mothers and Babies: Reducing Risk through Audits and Confidential Enquiries across the UK' report, based on births from January to December 2015

Review

Dr Brad Manktelow, of the University of Leicester, who led the review, said: "Those trusts and health boards identified with high rates of stillbirth or neonatal death rates should review the quality of the care they provide."

Experts grouped broadly similar organisations by their type and size to compare mortality rates.

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, which serves Kidderminster, was also in the 'red' category.

Diane Wake, chief executive for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Any stillbirth or neonatal death is a tragedy for the families involved and, whenever one occurs within the trust, a team of senior midwives, obstetricians and other clinicians carries out a full review into the circumstances."

Green wonderland to open up



Retired transport boss Peter Bridgens is opening his garden in Halesowen as part of the Open Gardens weekend

RETIRED transport boss Peter Bridgens is opening his lush oasis of a garden to the public to raise money for charity as part of the Open Gardens weekend.

From 2.30pm to 5.30pm, visitors to his home at 13 Lansdown Road, Hurst Green, Halesowen, will be able to view his garden at its best.

This year magnolias and liriiodendrons are present for the first time in seven years in the garden thanks to the climate.

Mr Bridgens, 66, who worked at

Birmingham City Council, gardens alongside his partner Michael King, 52.

He said: "I love working in the garden. It makes me happy and provides me with focus, while also creating a beautiful area next to the house to relax and explore."

His gardening hobby started early, at the age of three, after being given a plot of land to work on by his parents. Gardening is in the blood, his grandfather was head gardener at Alton Towers.

Mr Bridgens said: "One day, as a child, I woke my parents up at 4am having started work in our garden."

"It is something which stuck with me ever since."

Mr Bridgens has taken part in the Open Gardens scheme for more than 20 years, including seven years at his home in Halesowen.

The scheme sees people visit home gardens not usually open to the public, while also providing a donation to help various charities.

Car cruising father spared jail because of his children

A 32-year-old man who was caught breaching a ban on car cruising in the Black Country has been spared jail by a judge because of the potential effect on his children.

Pilipe Miguel Guerreiro Vaz was spotted by police among a gathering of 40 cars in Hallens Drive, Wednesbury, on April 30. His car had been modified, lowered with non-standard alloy wheels, while the back seats and boot had been stripped and a roll cage installed.

When approached by officers, he drove off at more than 70mph, but was caught when police used a stinger device to burst his tyres.

He admitted breach of the injunction which bans car cruising anywhere within the Black Country boroughs.

At the High Court in Birmingham, Judge Martin McKenna said that car cruising is an activity that was obviously dangerous, putting members of the public at risk. He added: "This sort of activity must be prevented and those who participate must understand that the court will take a very serious view of such behaviour."

The judge also said he had to take account that Vaz was father to two young children and effectively step-father to two more.

If Vaz, of Polden Close, Halesowen, was sent down immediately, there was a possibility he might lose his job, with significant effects on his family, the judge continued. He imposed a six-month term, suspended until February next year, but warned Vaz he is likely to serve a very significant period in jail if he breaches the injunction again. Vaz also has to pay £500 towards Sandwell Council's costs.

Murder of girl in wardrobe denied

AN unemployed man has denied the murder of a 17-year-old girl whose body was found in a cling film-wrapped wardrobe at a Brierley Hill flat.

Ashley Foster, of Highgate Road, pleaded not guilty to murdering Megan Bills between April 13 and 20 when he appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court last week.

The 24-year-old has admitted preventing the lawful and decent burial of Miss Bills between April 15 and May 5.

Her body was discovered at the flat in Highgate Road, Brierley Hill.

Foster was remanded in custody and is expected to stand trial on January 8.

Cricket club hosts beer and cider fest'

A CRICKET club will hold a beer festival next month. The inaugural Halesowen Cricket Club Beer Festival will take place between July 14 and 16, offering more than 20 real ales and 10 ciders from independent and local breweries, plus several gins and live music.

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Three new Argos stores are being opened soon

THREE new Argos shops will be coming to the region over the coming months.

Branches of the popular retail company will be arriving in Sainsbury's, Amblecote on July 26, Blackheath on August 2 and Kidderminster on August 9.

The new Argos shops will offer thousands of popular products for immediate pick up, with 20,000 products also available to be ordered to collect in-store within opening hours and 20,000 extra products available for home delivery.

There will also be eBay collection points so buyers can collect their eBay purchases.

Strategy

The move comes after Sainsbury's acquired Home Retail Group, which owns Argos and is part of its strategy to help its customers shop whenever and wherever they want.

The combination of Sainsbury's and Argos aims to give customers more choice across different product ranges.

Leigh Baxter, West Midlands regional manager for Argos, said: "We are really proud to be introducing shoppers to our new-look stores within Sainsbury's and give them access to the things they want quickly and easily."

"Shoppers increasingly browse and buy online via PCs, tablets and other mobile devices, while still wanting the immediacy of a local store to pick up their purchases."

£500 charity cash taken from gym

HUNDREDS of pounds of charity donations have been stolen from a gym.

Around £500 is thought to have been taken from Gymphobics on High Street, Halesowen, a ladies-only gym.

The cash had been donated by members for cancer charity Macmillan and Edward's Trust, which support bereaved parents and was kept in money bags and envelopes a locker. Some cash also belonged to the gym.

Someone is believed to have sneaked in to the gym on Wednesday (June 21), between 11.45am and 12.15pm.

Manager Andrea Withers said a key had been taken from the gym to gain access to the locker. The theft has been reported to the police.

High school holds its summer fair

WINDSOR High School and Sixth Form's Summer Fair is tomorrow (Friday) from 4.30pm to 7pm. It will feature a barbecue, tombola, raffle and sports. Admission is £1 adults, 50p children and free for under-5s.

Shopkeeper 'target' of machete attack



Police at the scene Image: @SnapperSK

A SHOPKEEPER was attacked by a gang wielding baseball bats and a machete in broad daylight in Lye High Street.

The man, named locally as Mohammed Taz, aged 36, suffered head injuries in the attack at around 9.30am on Friday.

Shocked workers from neighbouring businesses described seeing five men wearing balaclavas and armed with weapons pile out of a car and head into The Fruit Shop Mr Taz has run for more than 20 years. He ran to the Nisa shop across the road before

the police were called as the attackers fled in a black car. Police said it was thought to be a 'targeted attack'.

Sheila Wade, who runs a hairdressers nearby, said: "The car pulled up directly outside, a black people carrier with no registration plates. Five men got out, dressed in black and wearing balaclavas. They had four baseball bats with red tape on and a machete. They meant business."

Mr Taz's sister, who did not give her name, said: "He said five of them came with a sword. He legged it into the Nisa shop."

Police spokesman Brigg Ford said: "Police were alerted at 9.30am to a shop in Lye High Street during which a man was attacked with a machete."

"It's understood this was a targeted attack as the result of an on-going dispute and not a random attack - there is not deemed to be any risk to the public."

"A 36-year-old man has been taken to hospital with head injuries, his condition is not believed to be life threatening."

A man was arrested but later released without charge.

80,000 extra homes will have to be built

NEARLY 80,000 homes need to be built across the Black Country by 2036, according to a new report.

A consultation document for the Black Country Core Strategy has said sites have already been earmarked for around 60,000 homes, but bosses have said that there is a shortfall of 22,000.

As part of a new review there will be a 'call for sites' where people can put forward areas of land they feel may be suitable for development - and this could include green belt, according to Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley.

He has encouraged people to put forward any suggestions on where in the region the homes could be built.

He said: "This document will shape the Black Country for a generation and it's absolutely critical that people have their say on it."

"Making the most of brownfield land is a high priority for us and one of Dudley Council's main objectives in our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority."

"However, clearly at some point in the coming decades we are going to run out of these kind of sites as our population and our economy continues to grow."

Tough

"One issue that will come under discussion is building on green belt land. This is always something as a council we would see as very much a last resort."

"But something has to give, and there is no point burying our heads in the sand. We are clearly going to have to make some tough decisions on where these 22,000 new homes should go."

"That's why we are launching a consultation, along with the other three Black Country authorities, next month to enable people to have their say."

"It's important people tell us what they think and we would urge people to get in touch," Councillor Harley added.

People in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton have been urged to say where they think the homes should, or could, go.

A public consultation starts on Monday, July 3, and will run until September 10.

The Black Country Core Strategy outlines how many homes need to be built and how to plan for the number of extra jobs needed in a growing population. It also looks at where new homes and businesses should be located.

DY5 zone targets thousands of jobs



At the launch of the DY5 Dudley's Business and Innovation Enterprise Zone are Tom Westley, Black Country Local Enterprise Lead for the Enterprise Zone; Alan Lunt Strategic Director for Place, Dudley Council; Mayor of Dudley, Councillor David Tyler; Councillor Patrick Harley leader of Dudley Council; and Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for regeneration

A MULTI-MILLION pound plan aimed at bringing thousands of jobs and more than 300 businesses to Dudley has been launched.

The DY5 Business and Innovation Enterprise Zone covers 170 acres of land at Blackbrook Valley Industrial Estate and Pensnett, as well as office space on the Waterfront.

The development includes plans for improved transport links and is expected to see £589 million

ploughed into the region's economy each year. It is hoped it will create 7,000 jobs over 25 years.

Business leaders and council bosses were at the Copthorne Hotel in Brierley Hill on Thursday to see it launched, where a keynote speech was made by West Midlands Mayor Andy Street.

Councillor Patrick Harley, leader of Dudley Council, said: "These are very impressive plans that will put Dudley on the map."

"We want to send a message to businesses that we are open for business, that we have exciting opportunities for them and they are welcome here."

The Government-supported initiative attracts firms by offering a business rate discount of up to £55,000 per year over five years. Other benefits include the Metro line to be extended to Brierley Hill by 2023.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Extra dates for top comedians

COMEDIANS Jason Manford and Paul Chowdhry will be performing extra dates in Dudley.

The pair's shows at Dudley Town Hall are selling so well an extra date has been added for each in 2018.

Chowdhry, performing his show Live Innit in Dudley on October 12, will now have a second date on February 23 next year. Manford, at the town hall with his latest show Muddle Class on April 27 next year, will return for a second date on October 3. For more information, or to book, visit borough.halls.co.uk or call 01384 812812.

Summer festival in aid of hospice

A HOSPICE is holding a summer fundraising festival in the grounds of Himley Hall on Saturday.

Mary Stevens Hospice Summer Fest will take place from 10am to 5pm.

The event will offer live music, food and classic cars on show.

A family tickets for two adults and two children, costs £20. Tickets for people aged over 16 cost £8, under-16s £4, and under-twos go free.

All funds raised will go to Mary Stevens Hospice, which supports patients across the Black Country as well as their families.

Church serenade from choral group

A SINGING group will host a summer serenade at a church in the Black Country next weekend.

Halesowen Choral Society will sing at Hasbury Methodist Church on Albert Road on Saturday, July 8.

The concert starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £6.

Call 0121 550 7206 for more information about the concert or visit the society's website www.halesowenchoralsociety.org

Mayor's pledge to visit 100 firms over a year

THE Mayor of Dudley has pledged to visit 100 local businesses during his year of office. Councillor Dave Tyler made the pledge to promote the support available from the council.

Councillor Tyler said: "We have so many vibrant, ambitious businesses in the borough and I am keen to show my support for their energies and innovation. Any business which would like to be included in my 100 business pledge, can get in touch through my website." See mayorofdudley.org.uk

Wizard Fizzogs' show

FIZZOG productions is to stage a seasonal pantomime-style show that is a parody of the musical Wicked and the Wizard of Oz. Wicked Wizard of Fizzog is at Netherton Arts Centre from December 14 to 16. It will also tour. Suitable for 14-years-old and over, tickets £15 from www.thefizzogs.com

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4 Antique find is similar to royal collection piece

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, June 29, 2017



Wild Roses is made from rock crystal, gold, enamel, nephrite and diamonds

A PRECIOUS ornament valued at £1 million in the Black County Living Museum is similar to a piece in the Queen's collection. The Fabergé flower, which was valued when the Antiques Roadshow filmed at the museum last week, resembles a piece in the extensive Royal Collection.

'Wild Roses' is made of rock crystal, gold, enamel, nephrite and brilliant diamonds and dates from around 1900. It has been in the collection since 1953 and was 'probably acquired' by King Edward VII's wife Queen Alexandra.

A similar realistically modelled study exists in the India Early Minshall Collection, at the Cleveland Museum of Art in Ohio.

The floral ornament valued at the Black Country Living Museum was valued at around £1 million by expert Geoffrey Munn (see right) - making it one of the most expensive items in the show's 40-year span.

However, BBC bosses refused to reveal any details about the flower or a close up of the item.



Antiques Roadshow presenter Fiona Bruce outside the workers' institute



Sanna Ceesay brought a vase to be valued



Expert Geoffrey Munn with the £1m brooch - no close up until air time



Queuing up to have prized items valued by the experts



Expert Paul Attenbury examines a picture



Ms Bruce is in the middle of a huge crowd at the museum

£1m brooch stuns expert

A PIECE of jewellery worth around £1 million was discovered when the Antiques Roadshow filmed at the Black Country Living Museum, in Dudley.

The programme made in the Black Country last Wednesday episode will prove one for the history books - as a Fabergé brooch became one of the most expensive items ever valued on the show, which is approaching its 40th anniversary.

The item was looked at by experts

at the museum during a takeover of the attraction by the Roadshow which saw around 5,000 people attend.

Presenter Fiona Bruce said: "I'm excited that we've had such a good find."

Builder Dan Bansal, aged 50, from Hagley, was watching when the quality of the brooch stunned expert Geoffrey Munn.

Mr Bansal said: "The expert said it's probably the second time he's

ever done that type of valuation. I think he was reluctant to say £1 million and nervous to say it was worth that much."

Expensive

With its valuation, the brooch becomes one of the most expensive items in the show's history. Previous items given seven-figure valuations include a model of Antony Gormley's Angel of the North and the FA Cup presented between 1911 and 1992.

A BBC spokesman said the Fabergé piece was 'a really important find', but the history and exact value of the item has not yet been revealed by show bosses.

Executive producer Simon Shaw said: "We've had one of the most significant jewellery finds in 40 years of Antiques Roadshow history but we don't want to spoil the surprise."

The episode from the museum is due to air on the BBC later this year, in a series which starts in September.

Ms Bruce said: "The museum is absolutely beautiful - it's a great place. It's the kind of place that brings history alive."

Thousands of people braved scorching temperatures to attend the event, with doors opening at 9.30am. The first person to arrive was 39-year-old Birmingham nurse Sanna Ceesay, aged 39, who turned up at 4.15am to make sure she got in prime position to get the best view of the experts.

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Natalie search cold again after graves examination

THE search for missing Natalie Putt has gone cold again – two weeks after police examined human remains.

Natalie was last seen heading to local shops from her home in Upper Gornal 14 years ago, leaving behind her 11-week-old son.

Despite police and Crimewatch appeals, Natalie, who was aged 17 when she went missing, has never been found. At the beginning of this month, however, police received 'credible' new information which led them to Ruiton Cemetery, near Natalie's home. It came after Natalie's picture was shown on TV during the Missing People Choir's performance on Britain's Got Talent.

Business rate cap at £600 to help firms

A COUNCIL has launched a scheme to help pubs and small companies save money on their business rates.

The Dudley Council scheme is estimated to benefit more than 200 pubs, 45 small businesses and 230 other businesses if approved by council bosses next week.

Government has given the council £604,000 to help the 230 other businesses and will also foot the bill for pubs and small businesses.

Under the plans – yet to be finalised – the yearly business rates increase for small businesses will be capped at £600.

Finance boss Councillor Steve Clark said: "This will be a huge boost to small businesses and pubs across the borough."

"We have made it very clear that we'll do all we can to support these types of businesses to help them grow and have a positive impact on the economy."

Responsible

There was another twist when officers received a call from a phone box providing a name of a person who was described as being 'responsible' for Natalie's apparent death.

Officers have since appealed for that person to call them again. This week West Midlands Police said they had no update on the search for Natalie.

Her father David Putt said: "It is good in one way because they have not found a body, but had in another because we are desperate for closure."

He added: "I would hope the call to police from the phone box is not a prank. I hope that person calls again so we can finally get some answers."

Natalie would now be aged 31. Her home was in Thornleigh, yards from Ruiton Cemetery.

Natalie's sister Rebecca Coggins, who lives in Nottingham, said: "It makes me sick to think someone who knows something has not yet shared everything they know. That person must come forward."

Army Reserve host jobs and training fair



More than 350 people attended a jobs fair at Dudley Army Reserve Centre and at the Army Reserve Centre in Oldbury

MORE than 350 people attended a jobs fair at Dudley Army Reserve Centre as the Army Reserves joined forces with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to offer job and training opportunities.

For the fourth year in a row the Army Reserve Centre at Alamein House, home of the Royal Yeomanry's B Squadron, opened its doors to unemployed people and those considering a change of career.

Soldiers were on hand to talk to people about the many paid volun-

teer opportunities available as well as displaying some of the state of the art equipment used on exercises, including a RWMK (Revised Weapons Mounted Installation Kit), a lightly armoured, highly-mobile fire support and force protection Land Rover.

As well as the Army, Debenhams and National Express were among 40 employers manning stands in a hall where the ceiling was covered in webbing as used by the Army on exercises.

A DWP spokesperson said: "The Army has been so helpful running the

event with, as would be expected, military precision. This jobs fair just gets bigger and better every year."

The event took place on June 22.

It was a similar story in Oldbury, just days before, when DWP teamed up with 225 Field Squadron, Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia) at the Army Reserve Centre.

Soldiers from the squadron demonstrated some of their skills and equipment used for military engineering construction tasks that are also used in civilian workplaces.

Zoella joins internet stars at HelloWorld



Fashion and beauty vlogger Zoella

INTERNET STAR Zoella will join a host of fellow social media stars for a new live show in Birmingham which has been called the "Woodstock for the iPhone generation".

Online stars PointlessBlog, Joe Sugg, Caspar Lee, Rose and Rosie, Jim Chapman, Louise Pentland, KSI, Marcus Butler, and more are also among those taking part in HelloWorld, an immersive four-and-a-half-hour show.

Guests will be able to enter HelloWorld and take a stroll down Main Street while bands are performing, shops are open and an aerobics class is in full swing. Meanwhile, games, bake-offs, parades, a fashion show, live comedy, signings and talks will be taking place.

Creators say HelloWorld's guests can interact with their social media heroes on a giant video arcade machine. The action will also be watched by viewers online. The HelloWorld DJ will provide the soundtrack as guests cheer along to games and live interviews with the stars. The night closes with a giant house party.

HelloWorld will be at the Genting Arena on October 28 and 29, with tickets on sale today (Thursday) at 9am from www.theticketfactory.com or by calling 0844 3388222.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Bangin' as grime now leading the way

WITH all the talk about austerity and economic gloom, you might be interested to hear that there is one sector of the UK economy which appears to be doing very nicely, thank you very much. A nice little earner, with the potential to crack export markets right around the world.

According to the Official Charts Company, grime artists have seen their sales double over the past year, with the likes of Stormzy and Skepta leading the way. So it wasn't just me who was buying this stuff, then?

NOW you might think that that grime artists are painters with poor personal hygiene, but apparently not. According to worldwide web, grime is a type of music typified by rapid, syncopated breakbeats, generally 130 or 140 beats per minute, and which originated in East London. Which sounds a bit like Chas and Dave with drums. Bangin' man.

□□□

A MOTORIST claims to have had a chat with some aliens after their spaceship tailed her car in a remote, rural part of the United States.

She says the flaming spacecraft followed her car before stopping in front of her and asked her for directions to the e-cigarette stall on Willenhall Market. Actually I might have embellished the last bit, but you get the general drift. The lady claims to have told them: "I know that you can hear me because you all are a lot more intelligent and advanced than we are."

Which is probably true. But then again, the same could be said of people from the Black Country. But anyway, all this happened 40 years ago, and for some reason she has only just got round to telling the authorities.

Maybe it is because attitudes have changed, and she wasn't sure what kind of response she would have got had she gone to the police at the time. Although the words: "Would you mind blowing into this bag, madam", springs to mind.

□□□

MAYBE in the scheme of things, Tim Farron quitting as leader of the Liberal Democrats will probably not be causing you too many sleepless nights. No doubt, there are many people around who never knew who he was in the first place.

Nevertheless, we should all be very concerned when a party leader feels obliged to quit his post because his Christian faith is considered out of step with today's climate of political correctness.

It's the same with some of the comments about Democratic Unionists in Northern Ireland, who have been branded the "Dinosaur Party" because of their adherence to Christian values.

Isn't it incredible how the people who make the most noise about tolerance and diversity can never extend their liberal credentials towards Christianity?

As Sir Billy celebrates, Davis waits and Tim goes



Does David Davis measure up? Well, there are striking similarities to a particular columnist...



Arise Sir Billy – knighthood for the ex-pat comic, while the last surviving Dambuster gets an MBE



Farewell Farron – the unjust victim of bigots who claim to cherish diversity?

Big Yin's win puts a smile on some faces

REMEMBER that nice young man who sold you the double glazing and told you the super-efficient door would keep the coldest weather at bay? Do you recall him mentioning that in a heatwave the same door would warp, buckle and jam? No, me neither.

AFTER Michael Mosley's healthy-eating programme Trust Me – I'm a Doctor (BBC2) and a flurry of follow-up features in the glossy mags, a reader complains: "You can't get a white cabbage for love nor money." In all my years in journalism this is the first time I've witnessed a sauerkraut frenzy.

RESPECT to the Muslim men who fought back when a van crashed into a crowd near Finsbury Park Mosque. They had no idea whether their attacker was armed or whether the vehicle was a bomb. They just grabbed him, thumped him, detained him until the cops arrived and heeded their imam's pleas not to injure him. As I pointed out some days ago, terrorists are not superhuman. Facing a cohesive and determined group, they can be defeated. The official police advice to run, hide and report is sometimes no substitute for grab, wallop and pin down. Well done, all.

DAVID Davis, widely tipped this week as a possible successor to Theresa May, appears to have stolen my CV. Davis is a slightly overweight, sixtiesomething, Yorkshire-born, grammar-school educated husband, Euroceptic and former Territorial Army officer. What's not to like?

SOME voices stay with you all your life. My generation will never forget Oliver Postgate narrating the saga of Noddy the Nog, or Shirley Abicair singing about the Little Boy Fishing. For a later generation, the voice of the Play School and Play Away presenter Brian Cant will endure.

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



Cant's death was announced this week. He was 83 and I bet, even now, you can hear his soft, beautifully modulated voice as he introduced Trumpton's firemen: "Pugh, Pugh, Barney McGrew, Cuthbert, Dibble, Grub."

SHIRLEY Abicair? Still alive and well and living in Melbourne, aged 86.

WHEN he urged the homeless of Grenfell Tower to occupy empty properties in Kensington, Jeremy Corbyn must have known he was encouraging them to break the law. If the bewildered, shellshocked survivors of the inferno actually followed his advice they could end up in the sort of accommodation that has bars on the windows.

AS the first proper survey reveals the impact of the youth vote on the General Election, the message for any future Conservative government is plain: 1) Under no circumstances hold an election during university term time. 2) If 1) is impossible then immediately raise the voting age to 60.

AND off to the dentist to re-arrange an appointment. In Reception, a huge muscular bloke with a big beard was being quietly assured by the receptionist that all their dentists are very understanding about nervous patients. "They don't come any more nervous than me," I offered cheerfully, hoping to reassure him. But he would not even make eye-contact. It is a reminder that for some people, dread of the dentist is not merely a fear but a full-blown phobia.

Given the link between tooth decay and heart disease, it can be a lethal phobia. I cannot remember a time when painless dentistry and drill-free fillings were not promised to be just around the corner. Still waiting. . . .

SO 95-year old George "Johnny" Johnson, the last surviving Dambuster, gets a measly MBE in the Honours list while 'Big Yin' Billy Connolly, a comedian who doesn't even live in this country, gets a knighthood. Makes you proud to be British, doesn't it?

AND why did poor old Olivia de Havilland have to wait until she was 100 – seven decades after her greatest films – to become a dame? The only people who should be forced to wait that long for honours are sporting "heroes" with dodgy urine samples.

TIM Farron stands down as Lib-Dem leader because his Christian views have become easy meat for his political enemies. The people I despise most in politics are those who claim to cherish diversity in all things when the truth is that they cannot tolerate diversity of opinion. If you don't share their mind-set you're worthless. They are the worst sort of bigots.

GOT home to find my chronically unreliable BT broadband not working. The bloke on the BT helpline wanted to know which malfunction lights were flashing. Tricky. Like millions of males, I am colour-blind. The lights on a BT hub are red, green and orange. But the red is a sort of orangey red, the orange is reddish orange and the green is somewhere between red and orange and strikes me as a bit yellowish. The lad at BT gave me the usual guff about putting the customer first but rather spoiled it by adding that if the fault's on my side of the hub it'll cost me £100.

TALKING POINT



Seeing red as gingers join range of emojis

ONCE upon a time there was just Rita Fairclough. Jenny Matthews came, went and returned, while Les Battersby also rocked up on the cobbles.

He brought with him Cilla Brown and soon followed Chesney and Fizz.

Now we have Gary Windass and Craig Tinker, which does seem a high concentration in a street with around 13 houses.

Maybe should rename the soap opera Gingersation Street in tribute to the number of redheads currently residing in Weatherfield.

But, don't think this is a dig at the carrot-topped population. Far from it. It's actually a celebration of them, particularly as smart phone makers have finally come into the 21st century and recognised their existence.

Some of the biggest names in music over the decades are a certain shade of red, Cilla Black, Geri Halliwell, Ed Sheeran. Sporting superstar Steve Davis and even the fifth in line to the throne join them in a list of ginger greats. And let's not forget Emma Stone is an Oscar-winning actress.

They may make up less than two per cent of the world's population, but, like all minorities, it's still important they are represented in society. To that end, smart phone makers have finally decided to introduce ginger emojis.

Actually in Wales, Ireland and Scotland, a tenth of people sport red hair, and it was in the latter where an online petition was spearheaded, gathering 20,000 signatures.

The campaign document read: "Redheads. In all their glorious gingeriness, they've been missed out. Again. If you say you're going to diversify why not add a few red-haired emoji in the mix."

It acknowledged that while natural redheads may be rare, with such a small percentage of the world's inhabitants, that was still 138 million iPhones waiting to happen. The persistent campaigning on social media has now reaped its rewards. For, while emojis have evolved in recent years, there was still no redhead option, until now. Jeremy Burge, founder of emoji website Emojipedia – yes there is such a thing – has come to realise there is a gap in the market. He said: "The lack of a red-head emoji has been the most frequent complaint from users."

And, while they may be out painting the town red at the news, the bald truth is just as good for the follically-challenged too.

Mr Burge admitted that bald, curly and the white-haired could join them, too and these could all be rolled out by 2018.

In a day and age of multi-culturalism and diversity, I think it's a great idea that technology should be embraced and that minorities are being considered – not just as an afterthought. A grandmother from Coventry has even designed emojis that reflect old age, with false teeth and bad backs. Gets a thumbs up smiley from me!

MARK SHIPP

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Simple rule on overtaking being ignored

AFTER much deliberation, we decided to get a camera for the front of our car. Its advantages were highlighted on a recent journey down the M6 from the Lake District. As I was in the passenger seat, I was able to watch the stupid driving of others from an objective point of view, plus we could have called up recordings should an accident have occurred.

Like the female driver who drove for miles in the centre lane not overtaking. Like the white van driver who drove, with a large gap in front of him, for miles in the fast lane whilst traf-

fic built up behind him. Like the numerous HGVs who drove in the centre lanes at the same speed as the vehicle that they were trying to pass up slopes. Like the idiots who pulled out of access slip roads straight into traffic without waiting for a gap.

Most of the above cause traffic tailbacks and frustration, which can cause accidents.

After all, the nearside lane is THE driving lane, and the centre and outside lanes are for overtaking only.

The lorry situation is one that can be solved by Government taking ac-

tion. On many inclines on the continent, lorry overtaking by other lorries is banned at certain times (this regulation is also in place on stretches of some UK motorways). Why cannot this be introduced on the M6?

Pulling out of slip roads can be prevented by having barriers on the motorway side of the slips until it is safer to pull out (as is done on the continent).

Frustration while driving is a cause of accidents. So?

PETER COLE
Kingswinford

Wrong to blame the immigrants

DESPITE what some may say, about 80 per cent of the population are white British.

There have been huge communities of Irish people in London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow for centuries. They built our canals and railways.

There have been Asians, Africans and West Indians in the British army for centuries. They have all brought with them their fantastic cuisine.

They aren't the ones who claim to save the NHS whilst plundering millions from it for 'efficiency savings'.

Immigrants aren't allowing the rich to dodge taxes whilst cutting benefits for the poorest.

They aren't slashing funds for local authorities, causing closures of libraries, museums, art galleries, leisure centres and bus routes and care homes.

MICHAEL CLIFF
Wall Heath

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Code of Practice: Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at

Younger voters have shown immaturity

IF ever proof were needed of the folly of reducing the voting age from 21 to 18, it surely came in the form of the so-called 'youth vote' in this month's General Election.

Thousands of students displayed their immaturity, naivety and gullibility by voting for Corbyn's cynically, cleverly dangled carrot of the abolition of tuition fees. Safe in the knowledge that he didn't have a snowball in hell's chance of winning, Corbyn gleefully and mischievously made this promise along with other uncoded and unfulfillable measures such as four more bank holidays, free school meals, increase of the minimum wage, countless billions poured into the NHS, education and social care, etc, all of them appealing proposals we would all like to see implemented in an ideal world where money grows on trees.

MR B WILLIAMS
Wordsley

Concerns of the young are justified

LARGE numbers of young people voted in the General Election. This was an expression of passion and concern. This was a message to politicians that young people matter. That the future is being jeopardised in favour of short term policies.

Concerns are justifiable. House prices have rocketed far above the means of many. Saving for a mortgage will take many years or is impossible. For those in rented accommodation, in an unregulated market, it is not unusual for 50 per cent of one's income going towards rent.

Flexible working and low pay is no foundation for economic and social security. With the dawning of a technological revolution, fewer jobs will become available. Creeping privatisation of the NHS will erode the service. It is foolish and thoughtless to ignore young people. Their future is just as important as our present.

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Brave Tom faces muddy challenge for charity

CANCER survivor Tom Griffiths has watched with envy as his mother wallowed in mud, scrambled down sludgy slides and through boggy ground in the name of charity – and this year he will join in the fun himself!

The eight-year-old supported his mother Emma from the sidelines when she took part in Cancer Research UK's Pretty Muddy event.

So Tom – known to his mates as 'Tommy G' – was first in the queue when he heard that Race for Life was staging its first ever Pretty Muddy Kids.

The Tipton schoolboy says he can't wait to emulate his mother and get covered in mud at the event which is designed specifically for children. The course includes child-friendly mud-based obstacles and is around 2km long.

Leukaemia

Tom was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in 2013 at the age of four after complaining of persistent pains in his legs. Chemotherapy treatment meant Tom missed around half of his reception year at Tidvale Community Primary School, but he made up for lost time when the intensive part of his treatment was over.

In July last year Tom finished his treatment and his family feel that life has returned to normal.

Emma, 42, said: "We thought we were going to lose him when we first heard the word 'cancer'. But amazingly Tom went into remission after only four weeks of treatment and he's never looked back. We're now down to appointments every four months and life is great."



Tom Griffiths, aged 8, gets ready for a 'muddy good time' with mum Emma

"He's always been one for a bit of fun and he loves to get involved, so he was desperate to join in when I did Race for Life Pretty Muddy. He was delighted when he heard about Pretty Muddy Kids – it will be my turn to stand on the sidelines as he has a whale of a time and hurls mud at me."

Emma will not be missing out, she is taking part in the adult Race for Life Pretty Muddy event at Cofston Park in Longbridge later the same day.

Emma added: "Tom is really excited about taking part in Pretty Muddy

Kids and having an excuse to get really, really muddy."

"We hope boys and girls across the region will join him at Pretty Muddy Kids. It's a great opportunity to have fun while making a real difference in the fight against cancer."

The Race for Life family of events also includes the 5km Pretty Muddy adult course, which thousands of women will take part in at the same venue on July 15. To enter Race for Life Pretty Muddy Kids visit raceforlife.org or call 0300 123 0770.

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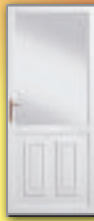
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Business awards back Beacon sight loss charity

THE Express & Star presented the Beacon Centre with a cheque for just over £2,800 thanks to the generosity of guests at the newspaper's Business Awards event.

Nearly 400 people who attended the awards at Wolverhampton Racecourse dug deep for the Sedgley-based charity. A series of top raffle prizes were also donated to encourage the willing crowd, who managed to raise £2,841.

The raffle prize winners were Faye Thompson, who snared six bottles of Champagne, and Mark Franklin, who won a John Lewis hamper and M&S gift card. A Wolverhampton Racecourse hospitality package was won by Victoria Leggett while John Wood scooped tickets to see an upcoming show at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, including a hospitality booth.

The cheque was presented by Express & Star Editor Keith Harrison to Beacon Centre chief executive Arwyn Jones. Mr Harrison said: "I'm delighted to present this donation to such a worthy cause."

Mr Jones added: "This generous donation will help us fund our low vision assessment and advice service, which is particularly important for those recently diagnosed. It can be a very emotional and traumatic time both for those directly affected and for their families."

The services can provide aids and assistive equipment to help people maintain an independent life and manage their sight loss, ranging from talking clocks to the latest scanning and magnification devices. Mr Jones said across the Black Country there were 36,000 people currently living with sight loss.



Express & Star editor Keith Harrison, left, presents a cheque to Beacon Centre chief executive Arwyn Jones

Armed officers patrol ‘around-the-clock’

POLICE chiefs have moved to reassure people in the West Midlands that armed officers are on standby 24/7 to protect the public.

Firearms officers have been a familiar sight in recent weeks after armed police were deployed on the streets following terror attacks in Manchester and London.

High-visibility teams have been stepped down with the lowering of the UK's terror threat but the force's firearms officers remain on mobile patrol and standby 24/7 to protect the public.

Chief Inspector Danny Delaney, from West Midlands Police's Firearms Unit, said: "Rest assured we have Armed Response Vehicles (ARVs) patrolling the West Midlands around the clock to keep people safe. They are not high-visibility units – they get about in unmarked police vehicles and it's likely most people will have been passed by one of our ARVs at some stage without realising there were armed police on board.

"These officers are trained to the highest standard and are on hand and equipped to swiftly respond to any emerging incidents should the need arise."

Brothers who preyed on elderly are given injunctions

TWO brothers who cheated elderly people out of thousands of pounds by tricking them into having urgent repair work done to their homes, have been served with anti-social behaviour injunctions.

Police took action against Lyndon Pardoe, who operated across Dudley, Birmingham, Walsall and Staffordshire, and older brother Glenn, who posed as self-employed builders, after being alerted by a suspicious bank manager.

The pair are said to have convinced the elderly people to have unnecessary work done including roof renovation, brickwork, paving and drainage and quoted vastly inflated prices.

Detectives said the pair would often re-visit victims that they knew were particularly vulnerable and more likely to hand over large amounts of cash.

Superintendent Brandon Langley, from West Midlands Police, said: "We are pleased with the terms of these injunctions.

Vulnerable

"The restrictions put in place mean that the Pardoes are no longer free to target the most vulnerable people in our communities by tricking them into handing over large amounts of money.

"Little or no regard has been shown for the humiliation they have caused their victims.

"We hope that our actions show that we are committed to working with our partners to ensure that no-one has to endure the actions of these individual's behaviour.

"I'd also encourage anyone who has suffered in a similar way to report it.

"I'd urge anyone who sees either of them breaking the terms of their injunction to report it to police on 101."

Glenn, aged 59, from Shard End, Birmingham, and Lyndon, 52, of Sheldon, Birmingham, were served the two-year injunctions at Birmingham County Court, which ban them from har-



Glenn Pardoe



Lyndon Pardoe

assing homeowners and accepting cash or cheque payments for work on homes.

Police started investigations after being contacted by a victim's bank.

The older brother worked for Wyld Green Roofing, based at a council tenancy home controlled by Andrea Clarke-Fitzgerald, of Plowden Road, Stechford.

She was also served an injunction preventing her premises being used for anything other than a private home.

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11 Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, June 29, 2017

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Disabled pensioner's tears in benefits row

A WHEELCHAIR-bound pensioner who contracted polio as a baby claims her benefits have been slashed because she could not name the doctor who diagnosed her 67 years ago.

Betty Whyley had been receiving up to £454 each month from the Government for more than 30 years as part of her Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – a benefit that helps with the extra costs of a long-term health condition or disability.

The pensioner, from Dudley, who recently fell and broke her leg, has been plagued with health problems since catching polio as a newborn.

Following an assessment in May, Mrs Whyley received a letter saying she did not qualify for PIP anymore because she did not fully take part in the consultation – a decision she claims was made on the basis she

was unable to name the doctor who diagnosed her when she was just six weeks old.

Mrs Whyley has been cared for by her husband of 48 years, Paul, who worked in the building trade while looking after his wife before retiring.

Mr Whyley, 66, said: "The first question was 'who diagnosed her with polio?' Being six weeks old she obviously didn't know, so we couldn't answer the question. We were immediately dismissed. She went away in tears. We're so worried now. She has been receiving that money for over 30 years and it's been a huge help for us."

A spokesperson at the Department for Work and Pensions said Mrs Whyley's PIP claim was disallowed because she left her assessment before it was completed but that she was welcome to submit a new claim.



Worried over money – disabled Betty Whyley, aged 67, with her husband Paul, 66, also her carer

Mayor praises £10m boost for museum

THE West Midlands Mayor has hailed a £10 million funding boost for the Black Country Living Museum which will see the attraction expand by a third.

Museum bosses want to recreate the post-war region by rescuing or resurrecting several famous buildings from the region, including Dudley's Woodside Library.

It was announced earlier this month that Heritage Lottery has awarded the museum £9.8m towards the project to create new 1930s to 60s town, which currently focuses on the Victorian into Edwardian era.

New Mayor Andy Street said: "I have been hugely impressed by the Black Country Living Museum's ambitious proposals to build on what is already regarded as one of the UK's top attractions of its type."

"This funding will be a huge boost for these future plans as they work towards an annual target of half-a-million visitors, which will be supported by the arrival of the Midland Metro tram line in the coming years."

"The museum also plays a huge part in preserving and showcasing the unique cultural heritage of the Black Country and the new project will underpin that."

Police are 'buckling' from cuts in funding

LOCAL policing is 'pretty much non-existent' when officers are deployed to terror incidents, says the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

David Jamieson has revealed that the force was 'buckling under the strain' of cuts that have seen its budget reduced by £140 million over seven years.

Meanwhile, The Chief Constable of West Midlands Police Dave Thompson has warned that his force would face 'real challenges' tackling a repeat of the 2011 riots following years of budget cuts.

That comes after Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick said British counter-terror agencies had been 'stretched' by the recent spate of terror attacks.

Mr Jamieson said the fact that the service has lost 1,746 officers since 2010 meant that 'when there is a major public order deployment, or in this case a reaction to an act of terror, local policing is pretty much non-existent'.

Challenge

He said the force was facing another budget cut of £6m this year and added: "We simply do not have enough people policing our streets."

"The police will always rise to challenge and do all they can to protect us, but we need a Government that will give them the resources they need to do so."

"Everyone can see that with the current situation it is not the time to cut police budgets. The threats we face are not reducing like our budget is."

By Peter Madeley

Chief Constable Thompson called on the Government to boost investment, protect frontline policing including bobbies on the beat and cut bureaucracy in a blog for the National Police Chiefs' Council.

He said: "The funding forces receive needs to be stabilised with real terms protection for policing as a whole. Last year we saw the prison service snap under pressure with riots in Birmingham Prison."

"We cannot afford this to happen to policing but the strain is showing from recent weeks and we'd have real challenges in dealing with something like the 2011 riots again."

"When things break recovery is never quick, and in policing it takes considerable time to recruit and train staff."

Met boss Ms Dick told a meeting of the Police and Crime Committee that other criminal investigations had been paused or delayed out of 'necessity' in the wake of four terror attacks in the UK this year.

Black Country firm launches wire app

ONE of the world's premier suppliers of wire in 'high performance alloys' has launched a new 'app' to help its global customer base find the right material for their applications.

Black Country-based Alloy Wire International (AWI) has spent the last four months developing an interactive database of all of its materials, their properties and their applications and this is now available on computers, mobile phones and tablets.

The web-based app, which has been developed by technical experts, allows users to search for the type of wire they need by industry sector by application solution, such as high strength, sub-zero temperature, heat, corrosion and wear resistance.

AWI makes round, flat, shaped profile and electrical resistance wire at its factory on Hurst Business Park, Brierley Hill, is planning to translate the 'Wire Finder' app into a range of other languages to support its export drive.

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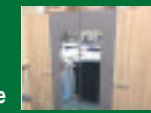
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Home comforts inspire author's debut novel

A WRITER now living in Singapore is using her Midlands roots as her inspiration.

The debut novel of Jo Furniss, *All the Little Children*, which will be published in September and is a thriller set in both Birmingham and Shropshire.

Jo spend a decade working as a broadcast journalist for the BBC, working for some time at Pebble Mill, before she 'gave up the glamour of night shifts to become a freelance writer and serial expatriate.'

Since leaving the UK in 2002 to follow her husband's job, she has lived in Switzerland and Cameroon and is now living in Singapore with her family. They still have a house in Newport, Shropshire, as their base in the UK.

As a journalist, she has worked on-line outlets and magazines such as *Monocle*, *The Economist*, *Business Traveller*, *Expat Living* (Singapore) and *Swiss News*. Jo has also edited books for a Nobel Laureate and the Palace of the Sultan of Brunei.



Journalist turned author Jo Furniss



The front cover of the debut novel

Edited

In 2015 she founded *www.SWAGlit.com* – an online literary magazine for writers in Singapore. Now she has moved into the world of fiction with this debut novel.

She said: "All the Little Children is a dark thriller about a mother who is forced to protect her children in the aftermath of a disaster. The novel is aimed at a "book club" readership, exploring issues to do with modern motherhood."

The book has already been described by a *Wall Street Journal* reviewer as 'a terrifyingly realistic story of survival and resilience.'

Jo said: "The action starts in South Shropshire. The locations are mostly fictionalised, but I have in mind the area around Craven Arms – the Shrop-

shire Hills. It should be quite recognisable to people from the area. There are also key scenes in Birmingham. I moved to the Midlands for university (Stoke) then stayed to work (BBC in Stoke and Birmingham) and married someone from the area, so Shropshire has become our home base."

As well as drawing on her local knowledge for the book she looked to her own experiences of motherhood.

On writing the book she said: "I started my career at the BBC, which demands many styles of writing. I dabbled with fiction too, but didn't prioritise it until I took an MA in professional writing in 2012. One short story I wrote as an exercise struck me

as having the potential to be a novel – I expanded it to be my final project and eventually it morphed into *All the Little Children*.

"It's been a long road to publication and I've attended courses, workshops and writer groups. As well as the nuts and bolts of writing, there are two key skills I learnt: you must be disciplined and you must be open to feedback. In that respect, starting as a journalist was good grounding. I've always seen writing as a job and, of course, you have to turn up and do your job even when you don't feel like it!

Jo is now working on her second novel to be released next year and using her experiences as an ex-pat.

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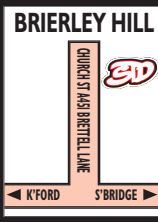
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Man stole van and £8k of tools from employer

A MAN who stole a van and £8,000 worth of tools from his employer over a pay dispute has been ordered to give back the money after appearing in court.

Daniel Brett, aged 30, from Windmill Hill, Cradley Heath, had been working for PEJ Construction, based in Bilston, for three months, where he was given a white Citroen Despatch van for work purposes, as well as £8,326 worth of tools to carry out jobs on behalf of the company.

During this period, he was repeatedly asked for a copy of his driving licence by the company but failed to provide it, until he started having frequent days off and bosses grew suspicious about his activities.

They then sacked him from his position and asked for their van back, however he did not return it. In the days that passed after that, tools began appearing for sale on the Facebook Marketplace, with the sellers' name matching that of Mr Brett.

Brett, who appeared at Walsall Magistrates Court last Tuesday for sentencing after being found guilty after trial, was visited by police on behalf of PEJ Construction and the van was found at his address without the tools.

Prosecuting, Mrs Maggie Meakin, said: "Police found the van at the defendant's address but the tools were gone. His version of events is that he was keeping the van in lieu of money he was owed for work."

The van was eventually returned to the company with no damage to it although the tools had to be replaced. Brett, who moved to the West Midlands from the North East five years ago, is now working as a supervisor for a construction company and is expecting a child with his partner.

Brett was ordered to pay back £8,326 in compensation to the company, as well as being given a 20 week prison sentence suspended for 12 months. He was also ordered to carry out 150 hours unpaid work by Deputy District Judge Steven Jonas.

Company backs school fete



Homescape's Becky Jackson with a selection of prizes donated for the raffle being held at Timbertree Academy's fete next week

BLACK Country furniture and homeware company Homescape has donated a large selection of items to a local primary school's summer fete.

Caroline Phipps, head of school at Timbertree Academy in Cradley Heath, said: "We are really grateful for this donation from Homescape for our fete. It's always nice to have support from local companies and we look forward to working with them in the future, helping to support the curriculum."

Timbertree Academy is located in Valley Road, just one mile from

Homescape's manufacturing and distribution centre on Corngreaves Trading Estate.

The school's summer fete is taking place on Thursday, July 6, at 3.15pm.

Vikram Avasthi, Homescape's managing director, said: "We are keen to forge links with the local community and were more than happy to donate items for the raffle at Timbertree's summer fete."

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More than 1,400 in Black Country School Games

HUNDREDS of youngsters from schools across the Black Country took part in an annual sports competition.

More than 1,400 youngsters from 80 schools were represented their boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton in the Black Country School Games.

The event was organised by Active Black Country, the sport arm of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

Youngsters from year three up to year nine took part in sports ranging from football to cricket and dodgeball.

The sports day, which took place on Friday at the University of Wolverhampton's Walsall Campus, was held to coincide with the launch of a scheme from Active Black Country aimed at getting people active.

Energy

James Topham, who is on the games organising committee, said: "The Black Country School Games is a fixture in our schools annual sporting calendar and all our pupils look forward to the culmination of a year of competition in school."

"The Black Country School Games showcases the energy and passion young people have for sport, leadership and competition and we look forward to seeing these young people participate in our summer festival."

Wolverhampton won the event, taking the crown off 2016 victors Sandwell. Dudley and Walsall came third with two category victories apiece.

It was the sixth year the event has run. Children took part in a range of different sporting events, and the points from all the events were added up to pick an overall winner.



One of the rugby games involving boys and girls from Black Country schools



Getting behind the team – enthusiastic youngsters cheer on classmates

Among the children taking part were Lucy Vaughan, aged 11, Ocean Suban, 10, Alfie Baker, seven, and Elliot Johnson, also seven, who were all from Howley Grange Primary School in Halesowen. Lucy, who came second in an obstacle race, said: "I'm enjoying the event, it is good fun." Ocean added: "I'm really enjoying the day."

The sports day involved competi-

tive events and leisure pursuits. Wolverhampton won golf, boys dodgeball (Year 7 and 8), mixed cricket, mixed rugby (Year 5 and 6) and girls' rugby (Year 7 and 8). Sandwell won multi-skills, football and girls' dodgeball (Year 7 and 8). Dudley won girls' cricket and boys' virtual triathlon. Walsall won girls' virtual triathlon and sports hall athletics.

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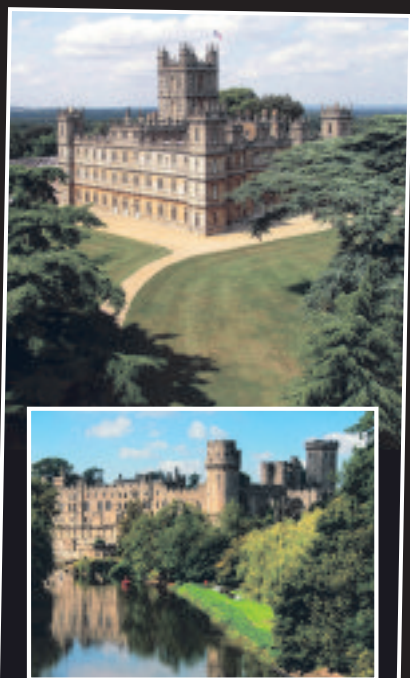
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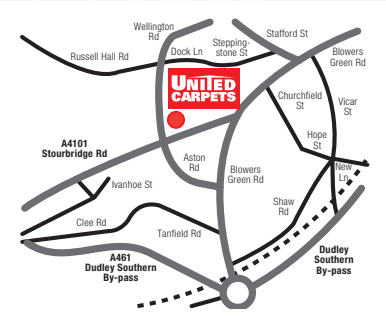
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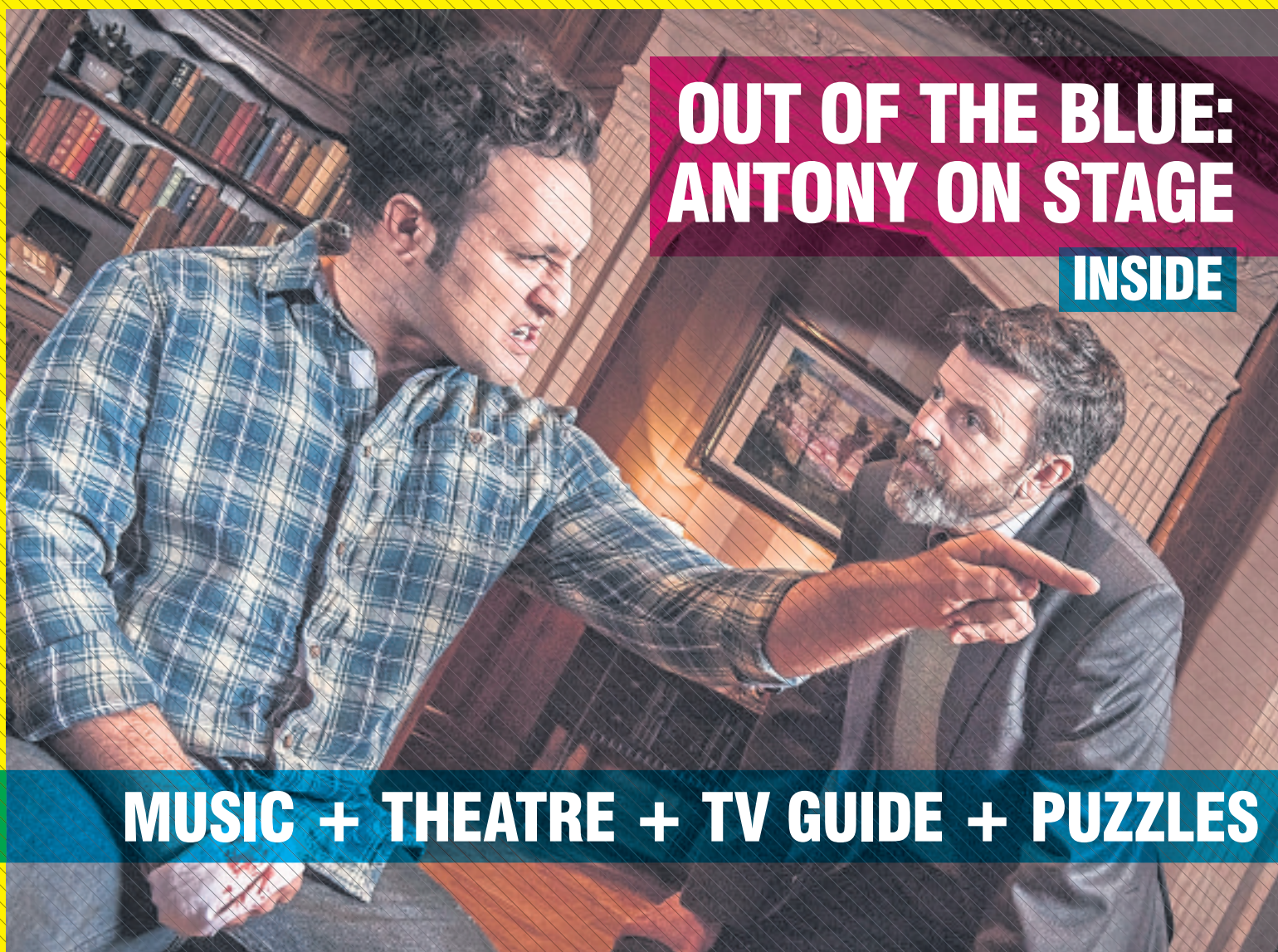
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OUT OF THE BLUE: ANTONY ON STAGE

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All Rise! Antony in Grand stage thriller

He's best known as the boy band singer who enjoyed hits with Too Close, All Rise and Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word. But before Antony Costa was scoring number one hit singles with the all-conquering Blue he was in fact, a child actor.

One of his earliest roles was a pupil in Steven Moffat's sitcom Chalk and he then went on to appear in the BBC's Grange Hill.

Having surfed the waves of the Blue reunion in recent years, Antony is returning to his roots. He's treading the boards in theatre, starring in Ruth Rendell's A Judgement In Stone. From Monday until July 8, he'll line up alongside a starry cast at Wolverhampton's Grand, featuring Andrew Lancel, Sophie Ward, Mark Wynter, Deborah Grant, Shirley Anne Field and Ben Nealon.

"I'm thrilled," he says. "It's been really, really good. We've had some fantastic reviews and it's a great cast of people."

The Bill Kenwright-produced show builds on the phenomenal decade-long success of The Agatha Christie Company. It is a new production adapted from one of the most celebrated works of the writer often hailed as the successor to Agatha Christie.

The action centres around Eunice, who struggles to fit in. When she joins a wealthy family as their housekeeper the very reason for her awkwardness, long hidden and deeply buried, leads inexorably to a terrible tale of murder in cold blood – on Valentine's Day.

The brilliant plot unravels a lifetime of deceit, despair and cover-ups which, when revealed, brings a shocking revelation almost as grizzly as murder itself.

THRILLER

Antony loves it. "There's something not quite right with Eunice and no one can see why. But I think what Ruth Rendell did so well was to more or less go on the psychology side of things. Why do these people do it? Why do they murder and everything else? It's a great show, a very fast-moving thriller and people are with us from start to finish."

Though Antony started his career as a child actor, he admits he still has much to learn. And featuring alongside some of the best in the business – like Andrew Lancel – has been inspiring. He's learned much from old hands of the stage and hopes it will hold him in good stead. "There are a lot of old school people in the show, but for me I'm always learning. If you stop learning, that's the time to quit. For now, I'm loving every minute of it. I hope the people of Wolverhampton do too."

"The thing is that I've always acted. I was a trained actor as a kid. My life went a different direction when I was 18. I loved pop videos and I was so interested in that aspect. When we were in Blue, it wasn't just about turning up, singing your song and going. I wanted to do more. So when this came up and Bill Kenwright called, I jumped at the chance. It gives me another string to my bow."

For a man who's spent most of his life in the spotlight, Antony is enjoying the chance to be out of it. He's very much part of the supporting cast, rather than a lead player, and feels the pressure is off. He

Antony stars alongside former Corrie star Andrew Lancel



can relax into his character and watch as experienced pros lead the line.

He also enjoys the fact that the audience are going to see a play – rather than see him sing. He knows it's about his character, rather than him.

"This gives me a new lease of life. I'm always learning. Nine out of 10 people at a pop concert are there to see me sing. That's why they come. It's about me, rather than the show. But this is the opposite. It's about the show, not me. And that takes the pressure off. My job is simple – I just need to give 110 per cent."

Some things don't change, of course, and Antony is back on the road with the show, just as he was in Blue. He's travelling the length of the country – though his visit to Wolverhampton might be punctuated by an important arrival. "I love being on the road and I've done it since I was 18. But it will be a weird week in Wolverhampton because my baby is due. If I get the call, I've got to go. For the first couple of days, I'll be there. But then the baby is due on the July 6. So we'll just have to see what happens. But I'm looking forward to the Grand Theatre. I've never been before."

And once A Judgement In Stone is done – and he's finished changing the nappies – he's keen to come back. Antony is open to more stage

It's about the show, not me. And that takes the pressure off. My job's simple

work and hopes it'll lead to TV acting roles.

"I want to do more stage work and if TV arose I'd jump on the chance. It all depends on timing or whether the part's right. You never know what's in the audience watching you. But I love it mate, I absolutely love it. The cast getting applause at the end is amazing."

"When we used to do a Blue tour, people booked tickets to see us which we were thankful for. But it's different now. I could sing a couple of lines of a song to a Blue crowd and they'd cheer. But for me, I like to get into the depth of a character. I like to be someone else for two and a half hours."

Not that Antony's acting ambitions spell the end of Blue. They'll be back every now and then.

"Listen mate, you know, if there's gigs coming up with the boys and the climate's right, we'll do a few shows. If there's an album and it's right, we'll do it. But I love being on stage right now and I need this for me. I don't want to live with regret because I didn't do this. You got to be selfish and do something yourself once in a while."

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The National Theatre production directed by Marianne Elliott picked up a record-breaking seven Oliver Awards and has been seen by more than a million people in London.

A delirious and dazzling blend of maths, technology,

drama and humour, it tells of teenager Christopher Boone, who has an extraordinary brain that means he is brilliant at maths but ill-equipped to deal with everyday life. His investigation into the killing of a neighbour's dog turns his life upside down.

Playing the role of Christopher in Birmingham will be Scott Reid, recently seen in BBC TV comedy *Still Game*.

National Theatre producer Kash Bennett said: "We were overwhelmed by the enthusiastic reception from audiences around the UK and Ireland when we toured *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* in 2014-15, playing to almost 400,000 people, and are delighted to take this beautiful and inventive show to new venues and make a return to others."

See www.birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.

Focus on daring shows in festival



BE Festival, Birmingham's summer festival of international performing arts, returns to Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, July 4 to 8.

It is a celebration that showcases daring new theatre, dance and circus from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, Greece and beyond.

Organisers say that in the wake of the Brexit referendum, organisations such as BE Festival has a greater responsibility to maintain bridges with the wider artistic community.

Highlights include *Asingleline*,

from Germany, an outdoor project that will literally stretch a single two-kilometre line of red tape from Ladywood over parks and roads into Birmingham Rep.

British Enough?, from Uzbekistan and the UK, is a new piece of immersive theatre that plays with the idea of the British Citizenship Test. *Anatomia Publica*, from Spain and France, is a story of strange relationships in the aftermath of war told through movement.

Highlights in the main evening theatre programme include *Portraits* and *Short Stories* by Dutch company Panama Pictures, who combine a daring use of ropes, trampolines, and acrobatics. *Odc Ensemble's* show *Revolt Athens* is a unique city guide that looks at

the living and breathing reality of Greece's capital.

Out of the competition of the main festival, *Animal Religion* from Spain present their show *Indomador*, pictured, in which a circus ringmaster performs daring feats, whilst attempting to control his inner animal, a comical yet punchy comment on identity.

Miguel Oyarzun, co-director of BE Festival, said: "Here, in the inclusive city of Birmingham, the multifaceted cultural identities and creativity of a continent will once again be celebrated."

There is a whole festival pass for £100 (£60 without dinner) or day/evening passes for £22, £14 or £12 concessions. See www.befestival.org or www.birmingham-rep.co.uk

Kemp converses and Decker rocks

An Audience with Martin Kemp on Tuesday evening at the Robin 2 in Bilston includes an hour-long question and answer session at the seated event. The 55-year-old, pictured, found fame as a pop heartthrob in *Spandau Ballet* in the 1980s, played *EastEnders* villain Steve Owen and was recently a judge on talent show *Let It Shine*.

Another '80s icon, Carol Decker, fronts her band T'Pau in concert at the Robin 2 on July 6. See therobin.co.uk or call 01902 401211.



Just Floyd ready for a chilled-out Sunday

Fans of Pink Floyd can chill out to an afternoon of their favourite sounds when tribute band Just Floyd play at Bilston's Robin 2 venue at 1pm on Sunday, focussing on the era of Dark Side of the Moon, Wish You Were Here and The Wall.

The same venue hosts Irish blues band Crow Black Chicken on Monday and a four-band bill of Midlands metal on Wednesday with Electus, Wakedown, Crows & Crosses and Michael Pritchard. More home grown hard rock can be heard on Saturday at the Slade Rooms in Wolverhampton when Our World Below top a five-band bill also featuring Master's Call, My Brother The Wolf, Rustlung and Enemy Of Atlas. On Sunday there is contemporary Nashville country music at the Slade Rooms from duo Jon Stone and Kristy Osmunson, known as American Young.

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CHOICE



Melvyn Bragg

Melvyn Bragg on TV: The Box that Changed the World (BBC2, 9pm)
Ken Loach, Joan Bakewell, Trevor Phillips, Michael Grace, Martha Kearney, Ed Balls, Lyse Doucet and Alex Crawford join Melvyn Bragg as he explores the extraordinary impact British television has made on the nation's culture since its first great unifying moment – the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. Filmed at Bafta, Bragg and his interviewees highlight the way television has reflected and influenced Great Britain has a whole, challenging authority, redefining celebrity, and evolving the concept of democracy.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Mary Berry Cooks. (R) **12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.15** Tennis from Eastbourne. The AEGON International final. **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.30** Film: Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. (1989) Action adventure sequel, starring Harrison Ford and Sean Connery. **5.25** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.45** Pointless Celebrities. (R)
6.30 **Doctor Who.** Peter Capaldi's tenure as the Doctor draws close to its conclusion as the Mondasian Cybermen rise. Not seen since the classic, pre-2005 series, the original Cybermen came from Mondas, "Earth's twin planet", and posed a fearsome threat to the Time Lord and his companions. Now, as these sinister cyborgs begin a new conquest, and the Doctor makes a final stand to protect a tiny band of humans from utter destruction. Pearl Mackie and Matt Lucas also star as Bill and Nardole, Michelle Gomez reprises her role as Missy, while John Simm puts in an appearance as the Master. Last in the series.
7.30 **Pitch Battle.** Mel Giedroyc hosts the third heat of the choral music contest, as six more choirs and vocal groups battle for a place in the Grand Final. This week, young chamber choir Tring Park, musical theatre enthusiasts 16, a capella group Oxford Alternatives, classical quintet Vox-Xover, all-female pop outfit Vocalities, and Dublin barbershop chorus The Ramparts all seek to impress judges Gareth Malone, Kelis, and guest adjudicator Joe Jonas. Plus, Pitch Battle's resident music director Deke Sharon opens the contest with a musical mash-up.
9.00 **Casualty.** Sam steps down as medical director to take a more hands-on role in the ED, and a feisty patient pushes Dylan over the edge as he struggles to cope in the wake of Cal's death.
9.50 **BBC News:** Weather; National Lottery Update.
10.10 **Film: Avengers Assemble.** (2012) Iron Man, Thor, Captain America and the Hulk join forces to defend Earth from an alien invasion. Superhero adventure, starring Robert Downey Jr.
12.25 Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.10 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **6.55** **Film:** Carnival Story. (1954) **8.30** **Film:** The Maggie. (1954) **10.00** Monty Halls' Great Irish Escape. (R) **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Food & Drink. (R) **12.30** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.15** Peter O'Toole: Talking Pictures. (R) **2.00** **Film:** Kidnapped. (1960) Historical adventure, starring Peter Finch. **3.30** Money for Nothing. (R) **4.15** Flog It! The team visit Blackpool Tower Circus. (R) **5.00** Gardeners' World. Rachel de Thame investigates how gardeners can aid honey bee conservation. (R)
6.00 **The Day the Dinosaurs Died.** An expedition to determine if an asteroid strike 66 million years ago triggered a catastrophe that killed off the dinosaurs and wiped out 75 per cent of all life on Earth. (R)
7.00 **Nature's Wildest Weapons: Horns, Tusks and Antlers: Natural World.** Professor Doug Emmlen examines how animals use their bodies as weapons, from elephants to rhinoceros beetles, assessing whether they are more than just instruments of blunt force. (R)
8.00 **Manchester International Festival: Everyone Welcome.** Lermi Sissay tours Manchester's biennial international arts festival, which features more than 60 new works by local and international artists.
8.30 **Dad's Army.** Frazer is asked to look after the platoon's Lewis gun, but finds himself in hot water when he misplaces the spring – and fears it is has been left inside a coffin. (R)
9.00 **Melvyn Bragg on TV: The Box that Changed the World.** Melvyn Bragg is joined by Lermi Sissay as he explores the impact television has made on British culture since the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.
11.00 **Film: Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll.** (2010) Biopic of influential punk singer Ian Dury, focusing on the impact his rise to fame and volatile personality had on his relationship with his son. With Andy Serkis and Bill Milner.
12.50 **Film:** The Deep. (2012) A trawler crewman swims to shore after his vessel capsizes, but is tormented by survivors' guilt. Fact-based drama, with Olafur Darri Olafsson and Johann G. Johannsson. **2.20** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Super-4. (R) **7.20** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.45** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.10** Ben 10. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** The Home Game. (R) **10.25** Film: Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. (2001) **1.15** ITV News: Weather. **1.30** ITV Racing: Live from Newcastle. Coverage from Newcastle and Newmarket. **4.00** The Chase. (R) **5.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R) **5.30** Little Big Shots US.
6.25 **Regional Programme; Weather.** **6.35** **ITV News: Weather.** **6.45** **Catchphrase.** Contestants Amy, Anthony and Abby join Stephen Mulhern to "see it and say it", as they try to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues. After the first elimination, the two remaining players battle to reach the Super Catchphrase round, where one of them could win £50,000.
7.30 **The Voice Kids.** The junior version of the singing talent contest continues, as Emma Willis ushers more youngsters between the ages of eight and 14 to the stage for a chance at stardom. With the Blind Auditions now beyond their halfway point, the pressure is on for judges Will.i.am, Danny Jones and Pixie Lott to finish filling their teams ahead of the battle rounds.
9.00 **Film: Quantum of Solace.** (2008) James Bond sets out on a personal mission of vengeance as he pursues the secret criminal organisation Quantum. His search leads him to the head of an ecological corporation, who is plotting to orchestrate a coup in a Latin American country to get his hands on a precious natural resource. Spy thriller sequel, starring Daniel Craig, Olga Kurylenko, Judi Dench, Gemma Arterton and Mathieu Amalric.
11.05 **ITV News: Weather.** **11.25** **Rebound.** Sean Fletcher hosts the quickfire quiz that tests the general knowledge of six contestants, who go head to head in a bid to walk away with a big cash prize. (R)
12.25 Jackpot247. **3.00** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **6.35** Mobil 1 The Grid. **7.05** Motor Sport: Ypres Rally. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Frasier. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.20** The Simpsons. (R) **11.50** The Simpsons. (R) **12.20** The Simpsons. (R) **12.50** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.25** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.55** Four in a Bed. (R) **2.30** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.00** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.35** Big House, Little House. **5.35** Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It. (R)
6.30 **Channel 4 News.** **7.00** **The Autistic Gardener.** Alan Gardner comes to the aid of two families in London that are seeking to transform their adjoining back gardens into one big playground for their children. Claire and Tim, and their neighbours Jess and Karl have four boys between them, and while they all agree the space should provide the kids with a safe space to play, Claire and Tim seek a romantic plot, while Jess and Karl would like to bring a touch of the Mediterranean to their home. Plus, Alan heads to Austin, Texas, where he finds an unusual source of inspiration for this project – in the form of a turbo jet engine. Last in the series.
8.00 **Film: Life of Pi.** (2012) A writer interviews a man about the extraordinary events of his life. He describes his childhood in India, living in the zoo run by his father, and how the family and their animals were forced to relocate to Canada when he was a teenager. However, during the sea voyage, the ship sank and he was left adrift in a small boat with a ferocious tiger. Ang Lee's adventure based on Yann Martel's novel, starring Suraj Sharma and Irrfan Khan.
10.25 **Film: Last Vegas.** (2013) Four sixtysomething friends decide to relive their wild youth with a trip to Las Vegas. Comedy, with Michael Douglas, Robert De Niro, Morgan Freeman and Kevin Kline.
12.30 Ramsay's Hotel Hell. (R) **1.15** Holyoaks. Omnibus. Hunter is devastated by Neeta's decision. **3.15** Ackley Bridge. (R) **4.10** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.05** Kirstie's Fill Your House for Free. (R) **5.15** Fifteen to One. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.15** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.50** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **11.15** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.10** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.10** The Great British Benellis Handout. (R) **2.10** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **3.10** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **4.05** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **5.00** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R)
6.00 **5 News Weekend.** **6.05** **Funnist Dogs Behaving Badly.** Comedians Des Clarke and Katy Brand present a selection of the internet's most popular videos featuring dogs, including one with a pooch dressed in a tarantula costume. (R)
7.00 **Blind Date.** Paul O'Grady seeks a would-be sweetheart for Arnold, who emigrated from Africa to Manchester, and served with the British Army in Afghanistan for nearly five years. Arnold's idea of a perfect date would involve a spin on the London Eye, and Paul gives three ladies a chance to woo the gentlemanly soldier. Meanwhile, finance director Gemma – also from Manchester – seeks an adventurous Prince Charming to settle down and start a family with. Plus, the host catches up with last week's couples, to find out whether that initial spark of attraction could develop into something more.
8.00 **Greatest Celebrity Wind-Ups** Ever! Joe Pasquale revisits hilarious celebrity pranks, with first-hand accounts from the people responsible for staging the tricks, and the unfortunate stars on the receiving end.
9.00 **Big Brother.** Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley.
10.05 **Moments That Rocked Talent Shows.** A journey through the instances that rocked the genre and the fall-out that followed. (R)
11.30 **Lip Sync Battle UK: Rufus Hound v Jorgie Porter.** (R)
11.55 **Access.** **12.00** SuperCasino. **3.10** Film: Vampire Academy. (2014) **4.50** Great Artists. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Britain and the Sea **8.00** Nature's Great Events **9.00** Film: Kon-Tiki (2012) **10.50** Top of the Pops: 1984 **11.50** Old Grey Whistle Test: 70's Gold **1.20** The Who at the Electric Proms **2.10** Totally British: 70s Rock 'n' Roll **3.10** Close
ITV2
11.00 Take Me Out **12.10** You've Been Framed! Gold Harry's Favourites **1.10** Film: Dragonheart (1996) **2.15** FYI Daily **2.20** Film: Dragonheart (1996) **3.10** Film: Beethoven's 2nd (1993) **4.10** FYI Daily **4.15** Film: Beethoven's 2nd (1993) **5.00** Film: Flubber (1997) **6.00** FYI Daily **6.05** Film: Flubber (1997) **6.50** Film: The Wedding Planner (2001) **7.50** FYI Daily **7.55** Film: The Wedding Planner (2001) **9.00** Love Island: The Weekly Hot List **10.00** Celebrity Juice **10.50** Family Guy **12.20** American Dad! **12.45** Film: Get Him to the Greek (2010) **1.45** FYI Daily **1.50** Film: Get Him to the Greek (2010) **2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
11.40 Inspector Morse **1.55** Hans Christian Andersen: My Life as a Fairy Tale **3.50** Wycliffe **4.55** Agatha Christie's Marple **9.00** Foyle's War **11.05** Law & Order: UK **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV4
11.00 Film: Rio Bravo (1959) **12.05** FYI Daily **12.10** Film: Rio Bravo (1959) **2.00** Tour de France Live. Coverage of stage one. **5.00** Storage Wars **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** The Big Fish Off **9.00** Film: Eraser (1996) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: Eraser (1996) **11.20** Film: Total Recall (1990) **12.20** FYI Daily **12.25** Film: Total Recall (1990) **1.35** Tour de France Highlights **2.35** Counting Cars **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
12.30 The Goldbergs **1.55** Film: Tooth Fairy (2010) **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: Thor (2011) **10.15** The Inbetweeners **11.20** Gogglebox **1.30** Tattoo Fixers **2.25** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.10** The Inbetweeners **4.05** How I Met Your Mother
Film4
11.00 Stuart Little (1999) **1.00** Hugo (2011) **3.25** Dunston Checks In (1996) **5.10** The Rewrite (2014) **7.20** Chronicle (2012) **9.00** Bad Neighbours (2014) A suburban couple enter into a vicious game of one-upmanship with the raucous student household living next door. Comedy, starring Seth Rogen. **10.50** Extraterrestrial (2014) **12.55** Five Deadly Venoms (1978) **3.05** Close

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

FANTASTIC CARVERY 7 DAYS A WEEK

They always say never judge a book by its cover so we decided to check out The Park Lane Tavern in Colley Gate, and I have to say what was on offer in there was a total surprise.



It serves a carvery option 7 days a week from midday which consists of a choice of 4 meats, turkey, beef, pork and gammon and accompanied by stuffing, Yorkshire puddings and up to 12 vegetables, topped off with what they call their “secret recipe gravy” known also as what mother used to make! All this for just £4.99 for a lunchtime meal or £5.99 evenings and Saturdays and £7.99 for Sunday lunch represents extremely good value by today’s standards.

They also don’t forget their mini diners with ‘Kids Eat Free’ Monday to Saturday between 3pm and 6pm and during school holidays it’s All Day Monday to Saturday.

But it doesn’t stop there they also have a full main menu consisting of the classic pub favourites such as steaks, mixed grills, burgers and fish and chips, where the fish would not be out of place in any issue of ‘Moby Dick’. To finish is there very tempting dessert menu, that’s if you have room after the size of meals you get at The Park Lane Tavern.

Then if that’s not enough choice for you you can also choose for the breakfast which is served Friday, Saturday and Sunday 08.30am until 11.00am. Their breakfast is a buffet style ‘All you can eat’ with enough choice to satisfy any diner from eggs 2 ways, bacon, sausage, mushrooms, baked beans, hash browns, black pudding, grilled fresh tomatoes, toast & fried bread.



There’s even jam for your toast if you still not full after all that.

Half Price Monday

They also host special evenings like their ‘Half Price Monday’ which has proven to be very popular, and why not, already reasonably priced selected main meals off their main menu (which includes steaks) at half price served between 5pm and 8pm every Monday. Also their psychic evenings where for £15 you get a reading from a medium and a carvery, for those believers amongst you that must be a bargain.

You get a very friendly feeling when you enter The Park Lane Tavern and that’s mostly down to the staff. Happy to see you and always keen to help. They have a lot of regular customers and it’s been known for a customer’s drink to be poured and waiting for them before they reach the bar, you don’t see that at many places nowadays.

There are no airs or graces at The Park Lane Tavern, you get delicious food at great prices served by happy staff in a comfortable environment. No wonder this place has people returning time after time.

CHOICE



George Best

George Best: All By Himself (BBC2, 9pm)

Documentary telling the story of the reserved young football prodigy from Belfast who became a global superstar, but whose career was blighted by his battle with the pressures of fame. The film reveals how the player dubbed El Beattie helped Manchester United to win two league titles and the European Cup, but his extravagant lifestyle led to various problems, most notably alcoholism.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News. Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.00** Money for Nothing. (R) **2.45** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.45** Eat Well for Less? (R) **4.45** Songs of Praise. **5.20** Sue Barker: Our Wimbledon.

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. Ellie Harrison meets a family making natural cordials and preserves using their own elderflowers, before visiting Worcester Cathedral to catch a glimpse of its lesser horseshoe bats, thought to be the only urban population in the country. Adam Henson heads to the Peak District and explains why he has decided to send his beef cattle to an animal sanctuary in Norfolk rather than the slaughterhouse.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. The roving team values more decorative objects and rarities belonging to the public.

9.00 Poldark. A grain ship is raided by starving villagers, and George arranges a harsh punishment for the desperate peasants while throwing a lavish Christmas party to impress the local gentry. Caroline hears news that the Admiralty has arranged for the release of the British officers, but Ross is not convinced, lamenting the loss of Wheel Leisure to George, and having seen miners broken by the terms of their labour. Demelza gives birth to a daughter, and warns Morwenaa against a relationship with Drake.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Miranda Hart - My What I Call Live Show. A filmed performance from the comedian's nationwide stand-up tour, combining stand-up comedy, sketches, songs and dance and featuring anecdotes ranging from flautist first dates to socially inept children. (R)

11.30 The Week the Landlords Moved In. A transformative series challenging some of Britain's most successful landlords to spend an eye-opening week living in one of their own rental properties. (R)

12.30 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.35 BBC News.

BBC2

6.20 The Instant Gardener. (R) **7.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.05** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.35** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.05** Wimbledon 2016 Review. **12.00** Athletics: Diamond League Highlights. **1.00** Athletics: World Championship Team Trials. Live coverage from Alexander Stadium in Birmingham. **5.00** Inside the Factory: How Our Favourite Foods Are Made. (R)

6.00 The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway: The Final Countdown.

Part one of two. Return of the documentary about the construction of the Crossrail train line linking east and west London, following those racing to complete the work in time for the first trains to run in May. Engineer Linda Miller and her team must battle ancient fault lines that threaten the Farringdon station site with flooding, while construction workers build innovative floating rail tracks directly under the Barbican Concert Hall. Julian Barratt narrates. (R)

7.00 Dragons' Den. The panel assesses more money-spinning ideas, including an unusual coffee lid, a range of coconut-based products, and a safety device for hairstyling gadgets. Evan Davis presents. (R)

8.00 The Life Swap Adventure. A daredevil Tennessee cowboy and a fun-loving Welsh office worker – both heirs to their lucrative family businesses – trade places hoping to find a new perspective on their lives.

9.00 Film: George Best: All By Himself. (2016) Documentary telling the story of the reserved young football prodigy from Belfast who became a global superstar, but whose career was blighted by his battle with the pressures of fame. The film reveals how the player dubbed El Beattie helped Manchester United to win two league titles and the European Cup, but his extravagant lifestyle led to various problems, most notably alcoholism.

10.30 Mock the Week. (R)

11.05 White Gold. Vincent finds himself kicked out of his family home, and Lavender is drawn back into the world of rock and roll as he has his own career crisis. (R)

11.35 Film: Burke & Hare. (2010)

1.00 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.00** Holy City. (R) **3.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Ooddbods. (R) **7.05** Super 4. (R) **7.20** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.45** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.10** Ben 10. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Judge Rinder. (R) **10.20** Judge Rinder. (R) **11.20** Tipping Point. (R) **12.25** ITV News: Weather. **12.35** Sabushka. (R) **1.35** The Voice Kids. (R) **3.05** Bear Grylls Survival School. (R) **3.30** Film: Hulk. (2003) Comic-strip adventure, starring Eric Bana.

6.05 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.15 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 Live 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup. The final (Kick-off 7.00pm). Coverage of the showpiece match from Saint Petersburg Stadium in Russia. Brazil produced a fine performance in front of their own fans four years ago to lift the trophy after defeating then world and European champions Spain 3-0, with Fred scoring early goals in each half and player of the tournament Neymar also finding the net. Subsequent programmes subject to change.

9.30 The Loch. Craig Petrie becomes a suspect in both murders, and Blake assists in questioning him. However, he quickly turns the tables on the police and casts doubt on Leighton's innocence. Annie investigates his claims further, and her loyalty to Leighton is shaken when she discovers his alibi is a lie. Smilie tries to comfort Jojo's father, but is rejected.

10.30 ITV News; Weather.

10.50 Lethal Weapon. As Riggs' attachment to Karen Palmer deepens, so do his impulsive actions – a cause of further concern for Captain Avery. Clayne Crawford and Kevin Rahm star. (R)

11.45 Take Me Out. Men try to impress 30 single women and win a date – but must get the female participants to keep their lights on as a sign of approval. Paddy McGuinness presents. (R)

12.40 Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.00** Motorsport UK. Action from Outpost. **3.30** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **6.35** 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **7.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Frasier. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Eating Well with Hensley + Hensley. **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Eat the Week. **1.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **2.30** Film: Dante's Peak. (1997) **4.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.35** Homes by the Sea.

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud follows software executive Andy and garden designer Nicki, who are planning to build a "floating" house on the Thames, which would be the first of its kind in the UK. Their architect has come up with an ambitious, experimental design that would see the whole property magically rise up with the flood waters. However, no one knows whether it will work, and the project soon becomes bogged down in the logistical challenges of bringing to fruition such a complex structure on a small island that is only accessible by a narrow footbridge. (R)

8.00 Dunkirk: The New Evidence. Documentary examining the famous Second World War evacuation of Allied soldiers – codenamed Operation Dynamo – from the beaches of Dunkirk, France, between May 26 and June 4, 1940.

9.00 The Handmaid's Tale. When a trade delegation from Mexico comes to Gilead, Offred discovers several shocking secrets. Serena Joy reflects on her marriage and the role she played in Gilead's inception. Drama based on the novel by Margaret Atwood and set in the dystopia of Gilead, a totalitarian society in what was formerly part of the United States. Starring Elisabeth Moss and Yvonne Strahovski.

10.15 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jimmy Carr hosts the words-and-numbers quiz, as Jon Richardson and David O'Doherty take on Johnny Vegas and Jamie Laing. Holly Walsh helps out in Dictionary Corner. (R)

11.10 Film: Trance. (2013) Crime thriller, starring James McAvoy. **1.00** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **1.50** The Last Leg. (R) **2.45** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **3.15** Gillette World Sport. **3.40** Mobil 1 The Grid. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Pip Ahoy! **6.10** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.15** Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) **6.20** Mr Men. **6.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.35** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.40** Wissper. (R) **6.50** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.00** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.15** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.25** Only the Little White Van. (R) **7.30** Only the Little White Van. (R) **7.35** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.50** Blaze and the Monster Machines. **8.10** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.25** Wissper. (R) **8.40** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.55** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.15** Little Princess. (R) **9.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **10.15** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.55** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.45** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.40** Film: Made of Honor. (2008) **4.40** Film: 13 Going on 30. (2004) **5.40** 5 News Update. **5.45** Film: 13 Going on 30. (2004)

6.30 Film: The Flintstones. (1994) Blue-collar caveman Fred Flintstone is promoted to manager and gets embroiled in an embezzlement plot. Live-action version of the cartoon comedy, with John Goodman and Rick Moranis.

8.05 That's So 1984. A look at the year that saw the Brighton hotel bombing, Torvill and Dean win gold at the Winter Olympics with their famous Bolero routine, the death of comedian Eric Morecambe and Virgin Atlantic Airways make its inaugural flight. Featuring hits by Black Lace, Cyndi Lauper, Sade and Frankie Goes to Hollywood. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley.

10.05 OMG. The story of a woman who has made several extreme changes to her body, including amputating a finger. Plus, people with large amounts of body piercing and tattoos.

11.05 Film: The Vow. (2012) A woman wakes up after a car crash with no memory of her husband, who tries to get her to fall in love with him again. Romantic drama, with Rachel McAdams.

1.05 SuperCasino. **3.10** The Hotel Inspector. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Handmade in Japan: Samurai Sword **7.30** Handmade in Japan: The Kimono **8.00** Handmade in Japan: Pottery **8.30** Schönbrunn Summer Night Concert from Vienna **10.00** Onk: Man Loves Pig – Storyville **11.20** Climate Change by Numbers **12.35** Darwin's Struggle: The Evolution of the Origin of Species **1.35** Nature's Great Events **2.35** Boxing at the Movies: Kings of the Ring **3.35** Close

ITV2

11.15 The Voice Kids **12.45** Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **1.45** FYI Daily **1.50** Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **2.35** Film: A Cinderella Story (2004) **3.35** FYI Daily **3.40** Film: A Cinderella Story (2004) **4.30** Film: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005) **5.30** FYI Daily **5.35** Film: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005) **6.45** Film: Step Up 3 (2010) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: Step Up 3 (2010) **9.00** Love Island **10.00** Love Island: Afterburn **11.00** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.55** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.25 The Darling Buds of May **12.40** Bertie and Elizabeth **2.50** Wycliffe **3.55** Foyle's War **6.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **8.00** The Bozza Cruise **10.05** Law & Order: UK **12.05** Wire in the Blood **3.30** May the Best Horse Win **5.10** Rising Damp **5.35** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4

11.00 Tour de France Live. **4.45** Hat-Trick Heroes **5.00** Pawn Stars **6.00** Fierce **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** Film: The Chase: Celebrity Special **9.00** Film: The Deer Hunter (1978) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: The Deer Hunter (1978) **12.45** The Football Mavericks **1.45** Tour de France Highlights **2.40** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **E4**

11.00 The Goldbergs **12.30** Film: Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986) **2.35** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special **9.00** Film: The Inbetweeners Movie (2011) **11.00** Film: Underworld: Awakening (2012) **12.45** Rude Tube **1.50** 8 Out of 10 Cats **2.35** How I Met Your Mother **3.20** Hollyoaks

Film4

11.00 The Ladykillers (1955) **1.00** The Parent Trap (1961) **3.35** Moomins on the Riviera (2014) **5.10** Evolution (2001) **7.20** Airplane! (1980) **9.00** The Monuments Men (2014) **11.20** Monsters (2010) **1.10** Bullhead (2011) **3.50** Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Stalking Elizabeth, Channel 5, 3.20pm
After the death of her daughter, a woman tries to regain a sense of normality by returning to teaching. However, she is assigned a mentor who develops an unsettling obsession for her. Drama, starring Jes Macallan, Aaron Douglas and Nic Bishop. (2014)

TUESDAY
Presumed Dead in Paradise, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A teenager is invited to spend a holiday on a Pacific island with her stepmother, and seemingly drowns. She survives her brush with death and swims to shore, only to discover her stepmother may have arranged the accident. As she investigates, she uncovers a sinister conspiracy with links to her dead father. Thriller, starring Malese Jow. (2013)

WEDNESDAY
In the Dark, Channel 5, 3.20pm
A woman is blinded following an accident in which her husband and child are killed. She employs a nurse as a carer, only to discover he has developed a dangerous obsession with her, which turns violent as she begins to regain her independence. Thriller, starring Elisabeth Rohm. (2013)



Begin Again, Friday, BBC1, 11.05pm

THURSDAY
George Best: All By Himself, BBC2, 11.15pm
Documentary telling the story of the reserved young football prodigy from Belfast who became a global superstar, but whose career was blighted by his battle with the pressures of fame. The film reveals how the player dubbed El Beattie helped Manchester United to win two league titles and the European Cup, but his extravagant lifestyle led to various problems, most notably alcoholism. (2016)

FRIDAY
Begin Again, BBC1, 11.05pm
A singer-songwriter is left cast adrift when her boyfriend leaves her after becoming a star. While performing in New York's East Village, she meets a record company executive whose career is in tatters, beginning a collaboration that turns both their lives around. Comedy drama, starring Keira Knightley and Mark Ruffalo. (2013)

It's no song and Dance for Charles in returning series

During an interview with the Metro in 2013, actor Charles Dance was asked about the public's perception of him as upper-class.

"It's a complete misconception – there's nothing aristocratic about me," he insisted.

"Some of it is down to how my face is put together. I'm not typecast to the extent that someone who has played the same character on a soap opera for 25 years would be."

But despite his protestations, the tall, sandy-haired actor doesn't deny he has made a career out of playing aristocratic and/or bureaucratic characters, mostly villains.

"I've earned a reasonably good living from it," he added.

Dance was born in Redditch, Worcestershire, in 1946 – the son of Eleanor (née Perks) and Walter Dance.

Growing up in Plymouth, he attended Widley Technical School for Boys in Crownhill and later attended The Leicester College of

Arts (now known as De Montfort University), where he studied Graphic Design and Photography.

Dance developed a taste for the theatre by listening to two elderly actors who ran a pub in his Dover neighbourhood. He became a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company during the mid-to-late-1970s and was in many of their productions in London and Stratford.

Dance made his TV debut in 1974, in BBC mystery series Father Brown, but his big break came 10 years later when he played the role of Guy Perron in The Jewel in the Crown, an adaptation of Paul Scott's novels that also made stars of Geraldine James and Art Malik.

Since then, he has also starred in many other British TV dramas such as Edward the Seventh, Murder Rooms, Randall and Hopkirk, Rebecca, The Phantom of the Opera, Fingersmith and Bleak House (for which he received an Emmy nomination).

He also played Guy Spencer, the

pro-Hitler propagandist, in Foyle's War, had an ongoing role as Dr Maitreavers in ITV drama Trinity, made a guest appearance in BBC drama Merlin, and played a vainglorious version of himself in Jam & Jerusalem.

In 2010, he signed up to play Havelock Vetinari in Sky's adaptation of Terry Pratchett's Going Postal, before then securing what would be one of his most memorable roles – Tywin Lannister in HBO's hit fantasy series Game of Thrones.

As Dance says, the aristocratic world he tends to inhabit on screen is nothing like his own background, and we find out all about it as the new series of genealogy show Who Do You Think You Are? begins tonight.

Dance's mother Eleanor was an under-house parlour maid and he wants to find out if he comes from a long line of servants, or if he can uncover some grander origins.

The actor is also determined to learn about his engineer father.



Who Do You Think You Are?, Thursday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
The Betrayed Girls, BBC1, 8.30pm
The 2012 trial of nine Asian men who were found guilty of the grooming, rape and sex trafficking of teenage girls in Rochdale shocked the nation – and five years on, the case continues to cause outrage. In May, the BBC broadcast Three Girls, a powerful drama which explored how the girls were let down by the authorities. Now this feature-length documentary hears from the real people at the heart of the story. It includes testimony from the victims as well as those who spoke out for them.

TUESDAY
Life Behind Bars: Visiting Hour, Channel 4, 9pm
The UK's prison population is an at all-time high, with over 86,000 people behind bars – which suggests that there's also a growing number of people visiting jailed loved ones. Cameras have been given unprecedented access to the visiting room at HMP Low Moss, one of the largest maximum-security prisons in Scotland, to see how the inmates doing hard time can try to reconnect with the lives they once had, even if it's just for 60 minutes. Among the stories featured are that of Gary and Charley, who aren't letting a lack of a

release date stand in the way of their wedding planning, while Mike receives a visit from his aging father, who he realises might not live to see him released. The programme also hears from wardens and staff about the importance of visiting hour.

WEDNESDAY
Joanna Lumley's India, ITV, 9pm
Despite being most people's idea of the quintessential English rose, Joanna Lumley was actually born in India during the last days of the Raj and both sides of her family called the country home for several generations. In her latest three-part series she returns to the land of her birth for a deeply personal journey. In tonight's first episode, Joanna travels from the very south of the country all the way to the foothills of the Himalayas. In Madurai, she explores the dazzling Meenakshi temple which comes alive at night with religious celebration, before going for a hair-raising motorcycle ride on the winding road to the Valparai Plateau. Later, she has an encounter with a female elephant and her calf, before exploring the world's biggest film studio

complex, Tollywood, and finishing up four hundred miles north of Calcutta, in Sikkim, where her grandfather was stationed for many years.

THURSDAY
Circus Kids: Our Secret World, Channel 5, 9pm
Some children don't have to run away to join the circus – they are born into it. This new three-part series ventures into a secretive and closely guarded world, steeped in centuries of tradition, to learn more about the lives of the young performers. It finds that while they may have freedoms that some other kids can only dream of, they also live at a demanding pace during the gruelling circus season, which runs from February to November. In this first episode, we meet 17-year-old



Joanna Lumley's India, Wednesday, ITV, 9pm

stunt ride Peter, who is the son of a circus owner and struggles to understand why anyone would want to live in just one place, and twins Esmerelda and Scarlett, who are already the little stars of the big top at the age of just two.

FRIDAY
The Secret World of Posh Pets, ITV, 8pm
In Doncaster, South Yorkshire, Bryn sets out to breed over £2million-worth of falcons to sell to the super-rich Sheikh and princes of the Middle East. High-earning city boy Zane sets out on a Bengal cat-breeding adventure, producing £1,000 kittens then reinvesting the proceeds in a super-rare domestic black panther. Meanwhile, having spent £4,000 on catering, dresses and miniature horse drawn carriages, Debbie can witness her Chihuahuas Honey and Joey tying the knot, in what is surely the doggy wedding of the year.

Peter Kay's Comedy Shuffle, BBC1, 9pm
The comedian, actor, writer and director recalls an ambitious nationwide challenge for Comic Relief and discusses his involvement in an armed raid with chat show supreme Michael Parkinson.

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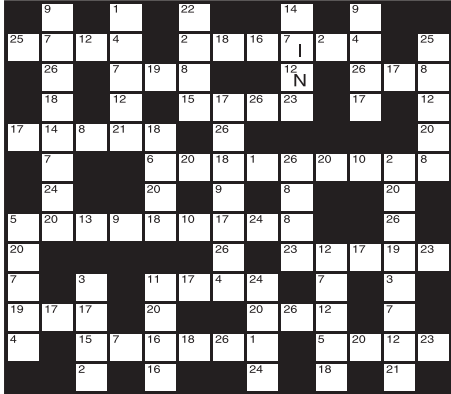
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No.436

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

T	C	B	M	Y	R	S	P	L	D	G	E	X
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
O	Z	K	I	H	J	A	F	Q	W	N	U	V

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

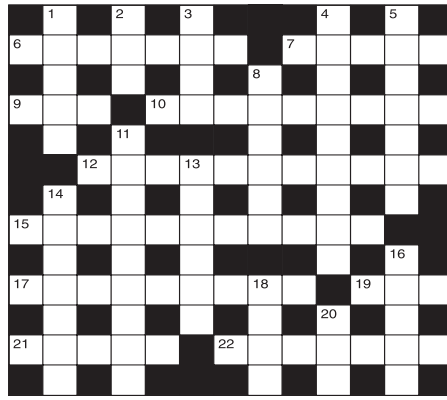
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- New cadet or old soldier (7)
- A patch put on a cuff, perhaps (5)
- Company that was floated to avoid liquidation (3)
- Nice trait, but somehow puzzling (9)
- Doing very well at a job at the Mint? (6,5)
- This side gains nothing but pleasure from its activities (7,4)
- Having the look of a powerful flyer (5-4)
- Come to a conclusion and object (3)
- Order a form (5)
- Distributors can't when supplies do (4,3)

Down

- Assumes it's durable (5)
- Water that is about a hundred degrees lower than steam (3)
- It may be caused by a pin lying around (4)
- Those on this roll may make their mark (9)
- Relatives unite as in a crisis (7)
- A girl properly adjusted (6)
- False description of atheists? (9)
- Accustoms user in new process (6)
- Can I provide a friendly solution? (7)
- Not appropriate, being excessive (5)
- Big lake up country (4)
- Father consumes eastern vegetable (3)



Quick Clues:

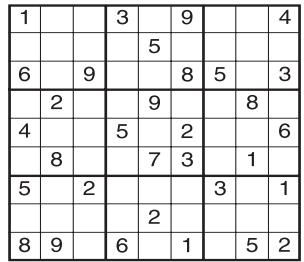
Across

- Lead (7)
- Moist (5)
- Breach (3)
- Lying down (9)
- Deceive (11)
- Piercing (11)
- Antagonist (9)
- Aged (3)
- Lure (5)
- Versus (7)

Down

- Fracture (5)
- Perform (3)
- Inactive (4)
- Riotous (9)
- Worthiness (7)
- Apex (6)
- Course (9)
- Powerful (6)
- Rally (7)
- Embrace (5)
- Brink (4)
- Strike (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	9	3	2	4	8	6	1	5
2	8	1	7	6	5	4	9	3
5	6	4	3	1	9	8	7	2
9	1	6	5	3	7	2	8	4
8	4	5	9	2	1	3	6	7
3	7	2	6	8	4	9	5	1
1	2	7	8	9	3	5	4	6
6	5	8	4	7	2	1	3	9
4	3	9	1	5	6	7	2	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Flight of steps; 8 Officers; 9 Ions; 10 Hunger; 12 Overdo; 14 Ascend; 16 Thrash; 18 Star; 20 Snapshot; 22 Have a good mind. Down: 1 All fours; 2 Egging; 3 Sty; 4 Offshoot; 5 Strike; 6 Open; 11 Redesign; 13 Discount; 15 Earn; 17 Resume; 19 Tear; 21 Amok.
QUICK - Across: 7 Recrimination; 8 Distance; 9 Easy; 10 Lament; 12 Indeed; 14 Reform; 16 Relate; 18 Chic; 20 Taciturn; 22 Perpendicular. Down: 1 Dedicate; 2 Withe; 3 Omen; 4 Inferior; 5 Attend; 6 Toss; 11 Tempting; 13 External; 15 Occupy; 17 Let out; 19 Heed; 21 Crib.

Quiz

- Who wrote the novel The History of Tom Jones?
- Of what is encephalitis the inflammation?
- Which veteran TV cook died in December 1994?
- Which country's parliament is the Folketing?
- What was a highwayman without a horse called?
- Of which country is Cape Byron the eastern extremity?
- What do we call a cloud of gas and dust in space?
- Which king was the intended victim of the Gunpowder Plot?
- Who wrote the play Look Back in Anger?
- Which Highland town became a city in 2001?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Electrical capacitance; 2 Enid Blyton; 3 Light-Emitting Diode; 4 Lighthouse of Alexandria; 5 Vientiane; 6 Indian; 7 Hedgehog; 8 Signs and symbols; 9 Rabies; 10 Henrik Ibsen.

Niner: LATHERING

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

42315
619658
6157

gives an element,
gives a second element,
gives atoms.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Sandwell Mayor visits the Queen

Commercial feature

Sandwell Mayor Julie Webb was on hand on Friday 7th April to officially open the Garden and Children's Play Area at the recently refurbished British Queen Sports Bar & Restaurant.

The bars owner Mr Sidhu, was delighted that the Mayor could take time in her busy schedule to conduct the ceremony.

Newly-refurbished and with an outside play area in the very attractive beer garden - which includes a smoking area - the British Queen has become a favourite haunt for many people who like a nice pint as well as top pub cuisine.

With draught and bottled beer, cider, wines and spirits on offer as well as tea or coffee, there is plenty to accommodate every drinker's taste.

Atmosphere

Among the British Queen's many masterpieces are the very popular barbecue rib fire and curries, sea food and vegetarian meals, to eat in, or even take away, if customers need to get back home.

And the friendly atmosphere inside means that there is a warm welcome for all, with live foot ball matches screened to tempt fans of the beautiful game, both on Big Sports and RT Sports, not to mention cricket, rugby, snooker and darts, depending on what is on at the time.

There is a good table and jukebox to provide further entertainment and our staff are professional, with extensive experience in the trade.

In fact all the staff are intent on maintaining



Sandwell Mayor with Mr Sidhu (owner), his friends and family



The refurbished interior of the pub



Some of the fine cuisine available

the Queen's fine reputation, which has been established over 11 and a half years of secure for the current owners - whose ethos has always been to take care of the customers.

So for size, clean seating inside and out, a friendly atmosphere, some of the best beer, quality food and service, why not try living it up in right royal style at the British Queen?

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8

Motoring

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4X4

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07977 939497.

EXCELLENT
CONDITIONRENAULT CLIO
DYNAMIQUE TOM TOM 1.2

2010, MoT,
 low mileage,
 AC, alloy wheels,
 EW, immaculate,
 economical.
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1ST TO SEE
WILL BUY

RENAULT SCENIC

AUTHENTIQUE

05 reg, 1.4, petrol, blue,
 40,000 miles, MoT November,
 last keeper was lady owner,
 alloy wheels, EW, EM, AC,
 original radio / CD

£995 ono.

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£1,595

07851 213316.

MUST BE SEEN

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 from new, MoT June 2018, all

usual extras, decuma grey.

£2,600 ono.

01902 764921.

MUST BE SEEN

VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 2.0

TDI, SRI

2012, MoT'd, alloy wheels,
 built in sat nav,
 92,000 miles, silver,
 excellent condition,

£2,795 ono.

01902 326666. 07949 590617.



VAUXHALL INSIGNIA ECO

2010, 79,400 miles, black,
 electric windows, air con, alarm,
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ESTATE

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 59,000 miles,
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 been checked by Evans
 Halshaw, with paperwork,
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 07923 191378.



VW JETTA 1.6 FSI S

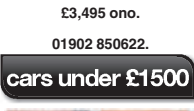
Petrol, 2009, one owner,
 63,000 miles, full VW service
 history, alloys, a/c, radio CD, 2

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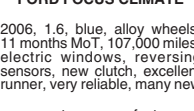
FORD FOCUS CLIMATE

2006, 1.6, blue, alloy wheels,
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 electric windows, reversing
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parts, runs perfect.

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07707 202385.



FORD KA

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07592 076079



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 seats, excellent hood, alloys,
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£1,495.

07546 779139.

MUST BE SEEN

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£495 ono.

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GOOD RUNNER

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 radio, good runner,

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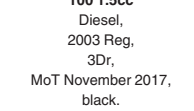
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DYNAMIQUE DCI

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 3Dr,
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 black.

£425.

07521 411373.



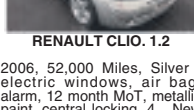
RENAULT CLIO. 1.2

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 paint, central locking, 4 New

Tyres Alloys, CD

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CONVERTIBLE 1.6

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1.2 16 valve, 02 Reg
 (MS02CUBJ) silver, 11 months
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 battery and water pump.

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07973 690543. 07913 528336.

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VW BEETLE

51 Reg.

1.6.

84,000 miles.

£950.

07984 043263.



VW BEETLE CABRIOLET

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£1,495.

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9
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Mazda's CX-5 offers a touch of class

By Ian Donaldson

MAZDA is launching a stealth attack on the premium SUV sector with its latest CX-5, taking over from the model that was the company's biggest seller in the UK, writes Ian Donaldson.

And the way you convince people your car is a class act is to make it quieter, says the company aiming to take sales away from the likes of VW and, whisper it, even Audi.

So the new car is heavier than the old one, in a world where brownie points are won by making cars lighter, because so much extra sonic deadening has been applied.

Nearly 50kgs, to be precise, or the weight of two extremely heavily loaded suitcases. And what a difference it makes, adding instant hush to a cabin that generates so little racket at speed you might never raise your voice again (except perhaps to tell the kids in the back to quieten down).

This hush-hush push is one of the ways you'll tell new CX-5 from old, and so is the body shape, although you might need to pose both versions side by side to notice.

Every exterior panel has been changed but Mazda has been understandably careful to preserve the lines of a car that sold partly because it looked so good in the first place. It still does, but with thinner LED headlights and sharper creases adding a touch of classy drama.

Inside, all is changed too but Mazda has kept the sense of order you feel in all its cars, so there is a lot of nicely applied blackness, set off a little by a dash insert that looks like the viciously expensive layering of a Japanese knife. It works well and, yes, adds to the premium feel dust Mazda is keen to sprinkle on the newcomer.

Adding class has added to the bottom line too, with prices up and now starting at £23,695 for a slow selling petrol version, a £200 lift. The likely biggest seller, the diesel CX-5 with 150 horsepower engine and front-wheel drive is up £900 and now costs from £25,695. The range tops out at £33,195 for a 175 horsepower car with automatic gears and all-wheel drive in Sport trim.

That is unless you are tempted by one of the pleasantly few options. There is only one non-chargeable paint (a flat white) so any other finish will cost at least £560, with a new version of Mazda's fetching and popular soul red adding a hefty £800.

Engines

Beneath the familiar but all-new body beat a trio of engines carried over from the previous car; a 2.0 litre 165 horsepower petrol unit and a couple of 2.565/ litre diesels with either 150 or 175 horsepower.

Their respective CO2 emissions are 149/132/142 g/km and official average fuel consumption 44.1/56.5/52.3 mpg – all as you'd expect and well in line with the opposition.

There are two trim levels, with SE-L Nav offering 17 ins alloys, cruise control, DAB radio and Bluetooth, a navigation system with three years free European map updates and dual-zone climate control.

Move up to Sport Nav and for an extra £3,000 you add 19 ins alloy wheels, reversing camera, powered tailgate, power adjustment for the driver's seat, black leather trim, head up display in the windscreen, heated steering wheel and a glass tilt and slide sunroof on the 175 horsepower model. There's also a 10 speaker Bose sound system, heard all the better in the newly quietened interior.

Tempting options are few but include stone



Mazda's new car is heavier than the old one because so much extra sonic deadening has been applied

coloured leather in place of black for £200 on Sport Nav models, radar cruise control (£800) and a safety pack (£800) that includes adaptive LED headlights, lane keeping assist (easily switched off it annoys you) and rear cross traffic alert, to warn as you back onto a busy road.

Most drivers will spend their three years or so with the 150 horsepower diesel doing the donkey work. They will find it a pleasantly refined companion, only raising its voice when really provoked, which you rarely need to do.

It showed 44mpg on a demanding and briskly driven Scottish test route and a typically Mazda-slick manual gearchange made the car feel even mildly sporty, with a nicely damped ride to go with it.

A more powerful 175 horsepower diesel, driven more gently but with automatic gears, showed the same 44mpg but felt much less responsive than the more modestly powered model. It did feel notably refined and grown up, though.

The much less in demand petrol engine

lacked the low down punch of the diesels (as expected, of course) but its lighter front end made the steering usefully more eager and the cabin stayed hushed even when the engine was working hard.

A gentle main road drive ended with the best economy of the lot, at 48mpg. The diesels would have done better still.

So, a choice of economical engines in a handsome car that drives well and is drawing room quiet inside. No wonder more than half all new Mazdas sold here will be one of them.

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£21.00 PACKAGE INCLUDES

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AN INSERT INTO YOUR LOCAL CHRONICLES
PLUS 6 NIGHTS FREE IF YOU DO NOT SELL!

RENAULT CLIO 1.2 CAMPUS
Sport, 06 plate, BFG, 55K four months tax, 11 months MoT, CD, EW, FSH, £3,450. 01902 123456.

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ClassifiedAds



Hartson nets from the spot against Wolves in 2006



John Hartson celebrates a goal for the Baggies with Nathan Ellington



Hartson enjoys a charity golf day with Stiliyan Petrov and Jon Whitney



Hartson talks candidly about his battle with cancer

Hartson's giving back after battle from brink

FORMER Albion striker John Hartson took no prisoners as a centre forward and doesn't pull any punches when he talks about the day he was told he had cancer.

"I thought I was going to die," he says candidly.

It was back in 2009 that the former Arsenal, Celtic and Wales striker had his worst fears confirmed.

He opened up about his diagnosis and also how it affected his time at The Hawthorns.

Now doing everything he can to raise awareness of testicular cancer through the John Hartson Foundation – there is a reason why the former striker spends most of his time doing charity work.

"I had a lump on my testicles for around four years before I went to see a doctor," the now 42-year-old said. "I know a lot of men are like that. You ignore it. You hope it's going to go away. I was boyish, I wasn't mature enough to face it.

"But that is what I want to change. My testicular cancer had spread to my lungs and brain. When I found out, I sat in my car and I cried.

Waste

"I thought that was it. I wasn't told I had a cold or something. It was cancer and cancer takes good people away from us. I was heartbroken. I was 32 years old and I thought, 'I can't dodge this bullet.'"

Hartson's cancer was at such an advanced stage there was no time to waste. Within days he was undergoing brain surgery. He then stopped breathing after contracting pneumonia.

For a month, hospital staff primarily worked to keep him alive rather than treat the cancer.

For Hartson himself, that time is now something of a blur – but he says he cannot forget the impact it had on his family.

"Cancer turns everybody's world upside down," he continued. "It was horrific. Your family members and your close friends actually feel it more than you, the patient.

"The patient is wired up to a machine. You are normally very heavily sedated. But it's your mum and dad, your brother, your sister, your kids – they are taking it home. They are living with it 24/7. My family

SPORTING MEMORIES

By Joe Masi

"I feel very lucky to have lived and that is why I want to give something back. We have had fantastic support."

were asking 'Is John going to live or die today? He has got a big operation tomorrow, a brain operation – is he going to survive?'"

Survive he did. Seven operations – including two on his brain – together with 65 sessions of chemotherapy saw the Swansea-born star defy the odds.

And now he's doing everything he can to make sure more men examine themselves and visit a doctor at the first sign of trouble.

Following his return to health, he launched the John Hartson Foundation to raise awareness of testicular cancer. In typically bullish Hartson fashion, the charity runs with the slogan 'Grab Life by the Balls' and has already raised more than £700,000 to help men diagnosed with the disease.

"I feel very lucky to have lived and that is why I want to give something back," Hartson said. "I set up the charity in 2010 and we have had fantastic support. I am very proud of the money we have raised. But it's more about the awareness."

In a glittering playing career Hartson won 51 caps for Wales and scored more than 100 goals for Celtic.

It was while a youngster at Luton that he first rose to prominence – with his impressive performances persuading Arsenal to make him the most expensive teenager in British football history.

"That was huge," Hartson recalled. "They paid £2.5million for me. George Graham signed me and I'll never forget travelling to Highbury in David Pleat's car.

"I didn't have an agent at the time and David Pleat's phone was ringing every five minutes and he just kept pressing the cancel button because he didn't

want to give the move away. I went from £275 a week at Luton to something like £4,000 a week at Arsenal. But that didn't matter. I knew I would make money in my career if I realised my potential. For me it was all about the opportunity and playing for such a fantastic football club."

Following his time with the Gunners, Hartson moved to West Ham and still holds the record of being the last player to score 20 Premier League goals in a season for the Hammers.

That prompted Wimbledon to pay £7.5million for his services in 1999 before he then enjoyed huge success at Celtic. But despite an outstanding career, Hartson admits he wished he performed better in his time as an Albion player.

"I loved it at West Brom and it all started so great for me," he said. "Bryan Robson signed me and Kevin Phillips on the same day. I came from Celtic and had several chats with Bryan over the summer.

"I had Zoltan Gera on one side and Jonathan Greening on the other side. Bryan said you'll get great delivery. It started really well but I do genuinely believe that I was carrying cancer at the time.

Problems

"Bryan then lost his job after seven games. Tony Mowbray came in and I knew all about him because I had played against his Hibs when I was at Celtic.

"The truth is I let Tony down because I wasn't the player he saw at Celtic. I was going through a divorce, I was having a few personal problems.

"But the West Brom fans and everyone at the club were fantastic to me.

"I look back now and West Brom was probably the only club, and I played for eight clubs, where the fans did not see the best of me.

"I had a wonderful career and worked with some seriously talented players and managers. But at Albion it didn't go as well as I would have liked.

"It's shame I couldn't excel there and be the player I was previously because I loved being a Baggie."

Hartson is now enjoying life working with his charity and also in the media.

"I have got five kids, a beautiful wife and I live in Edinburgh. I'm just so grateful to be here, it's amazing to think where I am now to where I was on that day I got my diagnosis."

Wednesfield up – but say sorry over leak

WEDNESFIELD have secured promotion to the West Midlands Premier Division after winning their FA appeal. However, the club has apologised over the disclosure of confidential documents during the hearing.

Members of the club's hierarchy travelled to Wembley to appeal against the decision to refuse them promotion to the league's top tier.

Dean Gill's side finished as runners-up in Division One. But following inspection on their Cottage Ground earlier in the season, the club were denied promotion.

After lodging an appeal and meeting FA chiefs at the headquarters in London, the governing body agreed to send down independent inspectors to the Cottage Ground. The inspector was sent to determine whether the stadium meets Premier Division requirements.

But after accidentally releasing confidential documents during the hearing, the club has issued an apology.

"During our appeal Wednesfield disclosed information about the hearing," a statement said.

"This information was private and confidential. We would therefore like to apologise to the FA and the WMRL for this error."

Canoeing club makes waves at competition

A CANOEING club made a splash at the National and Open Master Sprint Championship Regatta, with a number of successes.

Gailey Canoe Club won four golds, two silvers and one bronze in the competition at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham.

Bruce Blackman and Paul Brookes claimed silver in the K2, or two person kayak, 200m and 1000m sprints. They posted times of 45.37 seconds and four minutes, nine seconds – despite receiving a penalty point. That was followed by a bronze in the 500m, finishing with in 1:58.

Success followed in the under-12s lightning category, with Haydn Cooke-Bayley being part of three winning teams. He won gold in the K1, or one person kayak, and triumphed in the K2 with Lewis Andrews, from Leamington Spa.

Cooke-Bayley also won the K4, or four person kayak, category alongside club members Molly Cooke, Madison Cooke and Andrews.

In the women's races, Chelsea Brookes struck gold in the K2 200m with Kate Gritsinina from Southampton – the first time they had paddled together. Club secretary Louise Clive said: "We are delighted that the hard work of our members has paid off."

Football club's brace of community awards

WYRLEY Juniors FC has secured a double success. The club was awarded the Staffordshire FA Community Club of the Year – and secured the same accolade for the north west region, which covers Manchester, Liverpool, Lancashire, Cumbria and Cheshire counties as well as Staffordshire.

The awards were presented at the FA awards at Stoke City's Bet365 Stadium. They recognise the club's efforts in increasing participation and providing wellbeing sessions. Wyrley's teams have grown in two years from 48 to 65, and will rise to 70 next season.

Wyrley Juniors runs two soccer schools, has become a sister club to Birmingham City Ladies and holds mash-up sessions for girls at a local high school. It assisted UEFA in a girls' motivation study and it is actively involved in the new county female coaching group.

In the community it organises coffee mornings, donates Christmas presents to Birmingham Children's Hospital, distributes items to foodbanks and raises £1,000 a year for the Royal British Legion via its stick-on poppy appeal. Anyone interested in joining the club should contact chairman Keith Hardy on 07836 202764.



Summers' Sky TV shot for title glory

RICKY Summers' backers will be quids in if their man becomes the British light heavyweight champion on Saturday.

Tipton's Summers is 10-1 with most bookmakers to take the belt away from defending titlist Frank Buglioni this weekend. And the 29-year-old believes he can upset the odds and seize the crown away from the former world title challenger.

The two clash at the top of the bill at the 02 Arena in London, with Matchroom Boxing's end-of-season show broadcast live on Sky Sports.

Summers is unbeaten with 13 wins from 13 pro bouts with five TKOs, although he's never boxed outside of the West Midlands in the paid ranks.

Buglioni, 28, has 19 wins with 15 stoppages with two defeats and one draw, with one of those losses on points to Fedor Chudinov for the WBA world title at super middle.

He's also been beaten and halted in six by Siarhei Khamitski for the WBO European crown and drawn with Lee Markham for the same honours.

The Londoner is plotting the road past his voluntary defence and is even talking about a rematch with Hosea Burton, who he stopped in the 12th round for the British title.

Summers' fans think looking past his immediate test is disrespectful, but the challenger is of the opinion it's only mind games.

He said: "They don't call him 'the Wise Guy' for nothing, he's a smart kid. He probably wants to think that he's underestimated me. I've seen on social media that he is training hard and I'm expecting the best Frank Buglioni on the night. That's what I want."

"It's days away now and I'm excited, I couldn't ask for a bigger stage and to be in the main event, live on Sky Sports, will be a dream come true."

Hopes not gone for a Burton as Heathens search

CRADLEY boss Will Pottinger says they are "putting all their efforts" into finding a replacement for injury victim Ryan Burton.

Burton broke his collarbone in five places after a crash whilst guesting for SGB Championship side Scunthorpe on Sunday.

He is now set for a lengthy spell on the sidelines but Pottinger insists they won't let his injury hold them back ahead of a crucial run of Travel Plus National League fixtures.

With a trip to Stoke on Sunday (6pm) followed by a home clash with Buxton the following day (7.30) and a local derby with Birmingham 48 hours later, he is determined to resolve the issue sooner rather than later.

The Heathens boss said: "It's quite a complicated break from what I'm led to believe from Ryan, so it looks like he'll be out for quite a few weeks."

"We don't want to let it derail the clubs' play-off push, so we're aiming to get a good replacement in until Ryan is fit enough to get into the team."

Grow The Game grant boosts Town

DUDLEY TOWN are looking to continue their rapid growth as a club after being awarded a £4,500 grant which attracted praise from England boss Gareth Southgate.

The 'Grow the Game' grant – a £2.5m programme funded by the FA and the Football Foundation – will go towards creating more opportunities for youngsters, developing coaches and new equipment.

Former Villa defender Southgate, who is a Football Foundation ambassador, said: "I am so pleased that Dudley Town Football Club has secured this Grow the Game grant."

"The club has worked very hard with Birmingham

Football

County FA and the Football Foundation to get more local people playing football so that they can enjoy the many physical and mental benefits that come with playing regular sport."

The Robins have put in plenty of work to develop their youth section and, in just a couple of years, they have gone from having five junior sides to 15 for the upcoming season.

And with the grant, club secretary Dave Ferrier is hoping to provide opportunities to young players through a 'mini kickers' scheme, and also to

girls and disabled youngsters.

"At the moment, this season coming up, it is 15 youth teams that we have – and that is a huge stride forward for us," said Ferrier.

"We made a conscious decision to grow our youth section over the last 12 to 18 months. We got a head of youth development in Scott Holden and he's really helped get our name out there."

"We have grown from four or five teams to 15 in a short space of time, and the grant will help us move further forward. We would like to look at developing mini kickers, on the girls side and for disabled kids. We want to diversify and cater to all children of all abilities – that's our aim."

HALESOWEN'S MOVING UP

HALESOWEN'S season has now gained momentum and captain Richard Brooker is delighted with the work that the players have put in, after a decidedly shaky start.

Brooker said: "Although we have had to make some adjustments to the line up over recent weeks the players have really settled in to a style of play and format that we are comfortable with."

"This week we won with everyone taking control of the game and it was good to see the batsmen in particular drive home the run-scoring opportunities in chasing down Old Elizabethans 181-8'.

The win moves Halesowen to fifth in the table with just a 36 point gap to the promotion places – 20 points for a win on average – as other teams appear to be faltering.

Old Elizabethans were indebted to 57 from Richard Gardiner, who were only able to reach 181-8 as Halesowen stroled to a six wicket win with 77 from Unicorns' opening batsman Ed Kilbee.

Best

Atiq ur-Rehman took three for 58 for Old Elizabethans but the best return came from Halesowen's Adam Hawker with four for 35.

In the second team game, Walmley racked up 288-8 declared in 48 overs in a ragged bowling performance. Left arm spinner Tony Bullock claimed 4-58 in nine nine overs as Gower (102) and Bromley (74) put the Halesowen bowlers to the sword.

In reply, only Richard Cox (53) and Shaz Gill (38) responded with any application as the team were bowled out for 174 with Schmid (6-47) being the architect of the defeat.

The team now lie rock bottom of the Premier Division 2nd Xis.

The 3rd XI notched 230 all out against Claverley with stand-in Captain Luke Miley (72) and Hassan Akram (45) being main run scorers. But Claverley passed the total off the final ball with two wickets in hand with Alex Jordan (2-36) and Luke Miley (2-44) leading the way with the ball.

Get kick from Keegan night



Mayor Dave Tyler and organiser Steve Saul with a signed Kevin Keegan shirt

FOOTBALL legend Kevin Keegan will appear in an Evening With . . . in Brierley Hill later this year.

The night with the 66-year-old former England player and manager takes place at The Copthorne Hotel on October 19. He will talk about his long and eventful career in the game.

Tickets cost £60 and include a three-course meal and feature a charity raffle and auction with proceeds being split between the Mayor of Dudley's chosen charities – Dudley Mind, YMCA Black Country Group and Dudley Alzheimer's Society.

Keegan enjoyed a successful playing career with the likes of Liverpool, Hamburg and New-

castle before going into management. He came within a whisker of leading Newcastle to the Premier League title in the mid-90s before landing the England job in 1999. However, he lasted only 18 months and quit after a defeat against Germany at Wembley.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler said: "As a lifelong Liverpool fan, Kevin Keegan is one of my all-time footballing heroes."

"He is one of the most colourful characters in the game and will have plenty to talk about from his time both as a player and a manager."

It will be an honour to meet him and it promises to be a great night."

Tickets are available on 01902 244220.

Glassboys snap up new midfielder

STOURBRIDGE FC have snapped up accomplished 24-year old midfielder Connor Gater from Worcester City ahead of their return for pre-season training this Saturday.

Gater had attracted interest from other clubs over the summer, but the Glassboys have landed his services after he impressed in a three-month loan stint at the War Memorial Ground last season, despite suffering from a troublesome toe injury at the time.

He has since undergone surgery and has been undertaking rehab.

The former England schoolboys under 18 international linked up with Stourbridge towards the end of October 2016 and he started in the draw away at Whitehawk in the F A Cup first round before making a telling contribution as a substitute against Northampton Town in December and he also featured late on as a sub at Wycombe Wanderers.

Stourbridge have been advised by West Bromwich Albion that the scheduled opening friendly match away to the Baggies under 23 team on Saturday, July 8 will not be open to spectators at their training ground.

This means that supporters' first opportunity to run their eyes over Gary Hackett's new-look squad will be on Tuesday, July 18, when the club will welcome Birmingham City's Under 23s to the War Memorial Ground.

The Stourbridge FC Development Centre is launching a new mini-Glassboys group for five-year-olds. They are looking for the next generation of future Stourbridge players to start their footballing journey with the club.

The children will train and play friendlies, all within a fun learning environment. Parents/guardians should e-mail headofdevelopment@stourbridgefc.com to register interest.

Black Country trio in German triathlon

THIS weekend Dusseldorf hosted the European Sprint Distance Triathlon Championships where three Black Country Triathletes were competing having previously qualified in their age group.

The race involved a 750m swim in the Medien Hafen, followed by a one lap cycle of 20.7km then a 5km run.

Reece Ashfield finished in 1:12:46, the fifth Brit home and ninth in the 16-19 age group. Keith Bate in at 1:19:22, was first Brit and 13th in the 60-64 age group and Lauren Evans finished in 1:21:18, sixth Brit and 17th in the 20-24 age group.

★★★

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